

# *Radiology Associates of Ithaca*

"YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD RADIOLOGISTS PRACTICING WORLD CLASS IMAGING"  
101 Dates Drive, Ithaca, New York 14850

## **Positron Emission Tomography (PET Imaging)**

***What is the test?*** Positron emission tomography (PET Imaging) is a diagnostic test that captures detailed images of the body's cells at work, from the emission of positrons. Positrons are tiny particles emitted from a radioactive substance administered prior to the PET scan. This technology provides metabolic information and enables physicians to detect and analyze how the tissue cells are functioning. PET scans can be performed on the whole body and are used to evaluate a variety of diseases. These scans are usually performed on an outpatient basis.

***How do I prepare?*** You should avoid vigorous exercise for 24 hours prior to the exam. You may drink water but do not eat anything for 4 hours before your PET scan. Please plan to arrive at the Imaging Services Department 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes. Your doctor will instruct you regarding the use of medications before the test.

If you have diabetes, ask your doctor for specific guidelines to control glucose levels during the day of the test.

***What can I expect during the procedure?*** A nurse or technologist will accompany you to a room where a radioactive substance will be administered to you as an intravenous injection. It will take about 45 to 60 minutes for this substance to travel through your body and accumulate in the tissues to be imaged. During this time you must rest quietly and avoid significant movement or talking, which may alter the localization of the contrast.

When sufficient time has passed, you will be taken into the PET scanning room. The PET scanner has a hole in the middle like a large donut. You will be made as comfortable as possible before imaging begins. Scanning time is typically 45 to 60 minutes. While you are lying quietly, the bed will move into the scanner, capturing electronic signals that will be converted to images by a computer. Some people grow uncomfortable holding still for this period of time, however, movement compromises the quality of the study.

***After the test?*** Usually there are no restrictions following a PET scan. You should drink plenty of caffeine-free fluids to flush the radioactive substance from your body. We also encourage you to flush the toilet twice after use to be certain that any radioactive substance is discarded.

***How and when will I get my test results?*** Typically, within 48 hours a written report of your test results will be sent to your referring physician, who will review them with you. Additional time (3 to 5 days) may be required if we are comparing these test results to previous findings from another hospital or health-care provider.

***Where is the test performed?*** PET imaging is available at Cayuga Medical Center at 101 Dates Drive, off NYS Route 96 in Ithaca.