

Do not drink alcohol, caffeinated beverages or use nicotine products.

- Oncology treatments may affect the results of the exam. Please tell the technologist if you received radiation or chemotherapy treatments.
- Please bring all prior examination films or studies, (CT, MRI, Ultrasound, PET, etc.) not performed at Gwinnett Medical Center with you on the day of your exam.
- Wear warm, comfortable clothing free of metal zippers, snaps, etc. You may bring a change of clothing and a pair of warm socks.
- Leave your valuables at home. You must remove all jewelry, hair pins and clips before the exam.
- If you are pregnant or breast feeding, please tell your doctor before the exam.
- We cannot scan patients weighing more than 500 pounds on our stationary unit.
- If you had an allergic reaction to a contrast agent in the past, please tell our staff.

Note: We prepare a special radiopharmaceutical FDG (tracer) for each exam. If you cannot keep your appointment, please notify us at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being charged for the FDG dose.

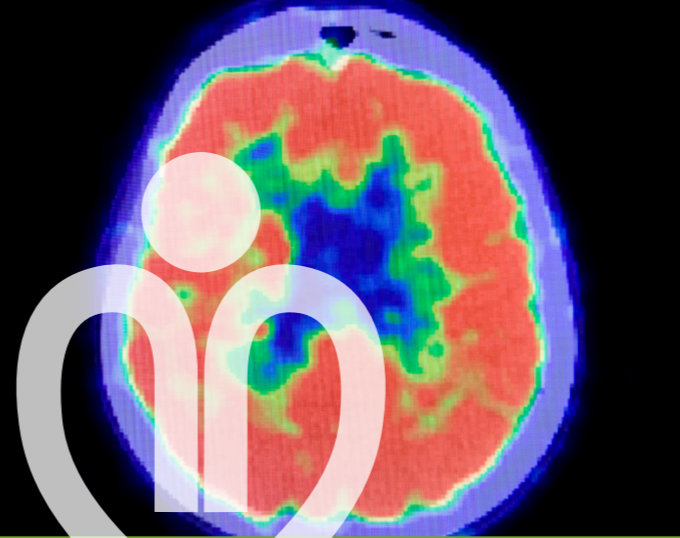


IMAGING SERVICES

Gwinnett Medical Center
Lawrenceville • Duluth • Hamilton Mill

For directions to any Gwinnett Medical Center facility, please call our Direction Line at 678-312-4652, or visit gwinnettmedicalcenter.org.

To schedule an appointment, call 678-312-3444.



PET/CT Scan
at Gwinnett Medical Center



IMAGING SERVICES

Gwinnett Medical Center
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Gwinnett Medical Center Imaging

Your doctor ordered an exam for you called a PET/CT scan. Please read this brochure to help you better understand and prepare for your exam. Your exam results may impact your doctor's diagnosis of a potential health problem and treatment plan.

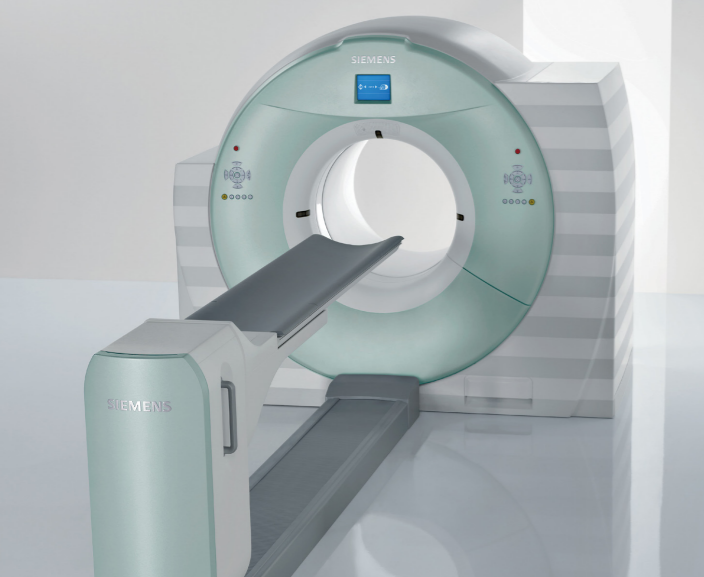
A PET/CT scan helps your doctor diagnose health problems, predict the success of different treatment programs and monitor your treatment progress.

What is PET/CT and how does it work?

A PET/CT (Positron Emission Tomography) is a non-invasive diagnostic imaging procedure that produces images of small changes in cellular metabolism. A very small amount of radioactive material, tracer (radionuclide or radioisotope), is injected into a vein. The tracer is tagged to a form of sugar that is used for energy by all cells in the body. Areas of abnormally high uptake of the tracer appear brighter on the scan.

How do I prepare for the PET/CT?

- Do not engage in strenuous activities, heavy lifting or exercising for 24 hours before your exam. A lot of muscle activity can interfere with the results of the exam.
- Do not take insulin or your diabetes medicine on the morning of your exam. We will schedule an early morning appointment for you and you can take your diabetes medicine after your scan. You may take other medicines (only with water) on the day of the exam, unless your doctor tells you not to take them.
- Do not take medicines that contain sugar, such as cough syrup or throat lozenges.
- Do not eat or drink anything except water for at least six hours before the exam. Do not chew gum or candy. Please eat a low carbohydrate diet for 24 hours before the exam.
- Drink plenty of water the day before the exam.



Our integrated technology enables us to perform both the PET and CT scan at the same time. The PET and CT images are fused together allowing the radiologist to see cancer activity and pinpoint its exact location. PET/CT can also be used to diagnose some Cardiac and Neurological disorders.

The PET/CT allows the doctor to determine if an abnormality is cancer. Additionally, it helps the doctor determine if a cancer has spread in patients who already have cancer.

A PET/CT scan can determine:

- The difference between scar tissue from radiation treatments and active tumor tissue
- If a mass or lesion is cancer
- If enlarged lymph nodes are a result of cancer
- If normal-size lymph nodes or normal-appearing tissue contains cancer
- How a tumor may respond to treatment
- If a patient suffering from dementia has Alzheimer's disease

What to expect during the PET/CT procedure?

When you arrive, we will give you a questionnaire to complete. Our technologist reviews your medical history and explains the procedure. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand.

We test your blood sugar. If your blood sugar is within the acceptable range, we will begin the procedure.

We start an IV and inject a small amount of tracer into your vein. You will rest in a quiet area for 45 minutes to an hour as the tracer circulates throughout your body. After going to the bathroom, we ask you to lie down on the comfortable, scanner bed. Please relax, breathe normally and lie very still. Movement may interfere with the scan results.

The scanner is open on both ends and does not produce sound. The table moves a little bit at a time, allowing the scanner to take multiple pictures of your body. You may feel a slight gliding movement as the table moves through the scanner.

Please tell us immediately if you cannot lie flat on your back for 30 minutes or if you are claustrophobic.

The technologist is located in a nearby room and continuously communicates with you during the procedure.

How long will the PET/CT procedure take?

Our goal is to provide you with a pleasant and comfortable procedure. If you are uncomfortable in any way, please inform the technologist. PET/CT exams are completely painless with no side effects. Plan on spending a total of two to three hours at GMC. The actual scan takes approximately 20 - 40 minutes, and the scan may be longer if your doctor has ordered one or more contrast CT scans to accompany your PET/CT scan.

What if I am claustrophobic?

If you are claustrophobic and feel that the PET/CT may cause anxiety, please ask your physician for anxiety medication. If you are taking anxiety medication, a family member or friend must accompany you. However, accompanying family/friends will not be allowed to wait in the exam room.

Please do not have small children or pregnant women accompany you. Make arrangements for childcare if necessary and avoid close contact with small children and pregnant women for at least four hours following the exam.

What to expect after the exam:

- Unless you have other exam appointments, you may leave after the scan. Remember to take your insulin or diabetes medicine.
- If you took anxiety medicine before the scan, you must have a family member or friend drive you home.
- You may begin your normal activities.
- Drink plenty of water and other fluids to help flush the tracer from your body.
- A Gwinnett Medical Center board-certified radiologist will read your PET/CT scan.

When do I get my PET/CT results?

The radiologist reads the results of your scan, writes a report, and forwards the report to your doctor usually within 24 - 48 hours.

How do I schedule an appointment for a PET/CT scan?

All exams require a referral from your doctor. We offer convenient weekday appointments and make every effort to schedule emergency appointments or add-on requests. When you call for an appointment, please be prepared to provide the following information about the person receiving the exam:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Social Security Number
- Insurance information
- Location of relevant imaging studies/films performed in the last two years

Will my insurance cover this procedure?

Gwinnett Medical Center accepts most major insurance plans. We make every effort to contact your insurance company to verify coverage and get authorization or certification for the exam. However, you are ultimately responsible for paying for services, including any remaining balance. We recommend that you contact your insurance carrier for details on specific coverage. Most insurance companies require pre-certification before scheduling the exam.

When do I check in on the day of my exam?

Please arrive an hour before your exam time. This provides time to verify your registration information and fill out any additional forms. Be sure to bring your insurance card and state issued identification.

Can I get a copy of my image study?

Your doctor can request a copy of your image study on CD. We protect the privacy of your personal and health information at all times.

Gwinnett Medical Center fulfills today's need for expert medical care delivered in a state-of-the-art facility. Our Imaging department is committed to providing the highest quality healthcare services to Gwinnett County and surrounding areas, using the latest technology.

