

Cardiac Perfusion

Patient Information and Instructions

Your doctor has selected Pacific Imaging and Treatment Center (PITC) for your Cardiac PET Perfusion study. PITC has a reputation for excellence in patient care, imaging and interpretation. Our study quality is second to none and results are provided to your physician within 24 hours.

WHAT IS A PET PERFUSION SCAN?

Cardiac PET (Positron Emission Tomography) Perfusion is one of the newest, most advanced imaging technologies available for heart imaging. The study has two basic purposes:

1. To evaluate the health of the coronary arteries (vessels that supply the heart with blood). If the arteries have narrowed or become blocked, the heart receives a limited amount of oxygen. This is called Coronary Artery Disease.
2. To evaluate the cardiac muscle. If a heart attack has occurred, a portion of the cardiac muscle may be weakened or cease functioning.

Cardiac PET perfusion may prevent the need for additional procedures, such as cardiac catheterization.

HOW DOES PET PERFUSION WORK?

Clinical studies have shown that Cardiac PET perfusion studies are the most accurate tests available in detecting Coronary Artery Disease. There are a variety of diagnostic tests available: ECG (electrocardiogram), exercise stress testing, SPECT (Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography), echocardiography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), and cardiac catheterization (angiogram). The PET perfusion study allows us to compare your heart perfusion (blood flow) and function at rest and under stress to evaluate abnormalities.

WHO SHOULD HAVE A CARDIAC PET PERFUSION STUDY?

Your doctor will determine whether this test is the most appropriate to evaluate your symptoms. For various reasons, in some patients, some tests are of lesser accuracy than PET, and therefore PET is recommended. Examples of these types of patients include diabetics, very large patients, women with large breasts, and those whose previous tests have been inconclusive.

Only a doctor can decide if Cardiac PET perfusion is right for you.

HOW LONG DOES THE STUDY TAKE?

Approximately 45 minutes for the scan itself, but the average appointment time is about 1-1 1/2 hours. During the study, the patient's blood pressure and heart are monitored continuously, while the patient receives a small amount of radioactive tracer introduced through an intravenous catheter in the arm. As the patient lies on the scanner table, cardiac imaging takes place. The images are captured at rest and while under pharmacologic stress. Pharmacologic stress is the administration of a medication, intravenously, over five to six minutes. This will cause the heart and other blood vessels to dilate and increase flow. Normal individuals will dilate, while patients with coronary blockage will remain unchanged. Although you may feel warm, flushed, or even mildly short of breath, the test is very safe and extremely important to diagnose any problems.

PREPARING FOR YOUR PET PERFUSION STUDY

- For 6 hours before your test, do not eat or drink. **You are, however, encouraged to drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.**
- Continue to take any medication prescribed by your physician. If you are taking beta-blockers for your blood pressure, please clarify with your doctor if these are to be held until after the study.
- Avoid caffeine and tobacco for 24 hours prior to your exam. Both will interfere with the medication given to dilate the vessels.
- If you have asthma, call the center staff 48 before your scan.
- If you are, or think you may be pregnant, discuss this with your physician. Generally, PET Perfusions are not performed on pregnant women.
- **If you are a diabetic, please contact our office for special instructions.**

ARRIVE ON TIME

- Please arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment.
- If you must cancel or reschedule, please do so at least 24 hours before your appointment. We order a specific dose for each patient which we cannot use for anyone else.

WHAT TO BRING AND WEAR

Bring with you:

- Insurance cards
- Medical history
- List of medications

Wear warm, comfortable clothes, since the scanner room is cool. Avoid clothes with heavy buckles or metal components. **For women: Please wear a bra without any under wire or metal clasps (i.e. sports bra or pull-over bra preferred)**

AFTER YOUR SCAN

- You can leave immediately.
- Your activity will not be restricted. You may drive if you wish, resume your normal diet, exercise and take all prescribed medications.
- The PET perfusion study will be reviewed by a physician who will send the report to your doctor.
- Your doctor will contact you about the results of your PET perfusion scan.

If you have any questions prior to your Cardiac scan, please contact us at (858) 569-7800.

Cancellation Policy: Please inform PITS no later than 3:30 pm on the Friday prior to your appointment so that we can cancel the radiopharmaceutical dose. Radiopharmaceuticals are very costly and your dose cannot be used for another patient.

Your physician may potentially receive financial benefits from services you receive at this location. If this is of concern to you please notify your physician to find an alternate imaging facility.

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