

## A Patient's Guide to PET/CT Scans

### PET/CT Preparation Instructions

A PET/CT scan uses very small amounts of glucose, which is simply sugar, to make images within the body. The foods you eat affect our blood sugar, which in return may affect the quality of the exam. Some of the foods that cause higher blood sugars tend to make the test results less accurate. Patients with diabetes have better tests if they follow these instructions carefully.

### Day Prior to Your Appointment

- Please **avoid** eating foods high in carbohydrates. These foods include potatoes, pasta, rice, breads, pretzels, cookies, candy, soda pop and alcoholic beverages.
- Please **eat** foods high in protein such as meats, eggs and vegetables that are low in starch. It is best to drink plenty of water the day before your appointment.

### Day of Your Appointment (**Diabetic instructions are highlighted below**)

- You should have **nothing** to eat or drink **except** water for a minimum of 4 hours with 6 hours being optimal, before your appointment time. This includes chewing gum, hard candy, breath mints and tobacco products. Please avoid strenuous exercise.
- Dress comfortably in layers to stay warm as some scanner rooms are cool. Please avoid large buttons and other metal objects on your clothing. Generally, you will not have to change out of your clothes for the procedure.
- For best results, regular and long acting insulin should not be taken within 2 hours of your appointment time. **All medications should be taken as prescribed.** Medications that should not be taken on an empty stomach can be taken with water and saltine crackers. If you begin to feel sick and attribute this to a drop in blood sugar, eat a few saltine crackers and elevate your legs. A high blood sugar reading **could** cause your scan to be rescheduled. **Diabetic patients should call 517.364.3573 for further instructions.**
- Our goal for the best possible scan is to have your blood sugar between 50 and 200 mg/dl, with below 150 mg/dl being better. If your sugar is outside of this range, your procedure will have to be rescheduled.
- You should take all other medications prescribed by your physician the day of the scan. Medications that should not be taken on an empty stomach can be taken with water and crackers.
- It is important to be well hydrated. Starting two hours prior to your test, you will need to drink plenty of water - we suggest 24-32 oz. You may go to the bathroom as needed. This important requirement improves your test.

### What to Expect During your Procedure

- Our staff will check your blood sugar when you arrive for your scan. If your blood sugar is high, a radiologist will review your history and **may** advise rescheduling your scan.
- Our staff will interview you to discuss your medical history. While a PET/CT scan requires an IV to be started, it is otherwise painless with no side effects. A technologist will give you a very small amount of radioactive sugar through your IV. Please feel free to ask your technologist any questions that you may have about the test.
- You will sit or lie comfortably for 45-90 minutes after the technologist gives you the radioactive sugar. You may be asked to use the restroom. Typical scan times are often less than 30 minutes. You need to plan on being available for approximately 2 to 3 hours for the entire process.

**Please arrive 30 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment.**

### After Your Appointment

- You can eat and drink anything that you wish. You may resume normal activities.
- Your test will be interpreted by a radiologist who will send a report to your referring physician. You should contact your referring physician directly to discuss the results.