

Common Research Procedures: PET Scans

What is Positron Emission Tomography (PET)?

A positron emission tomography (PET) scan is a test done on the outside of the body to see what is happening on the inside. Before a PET scan you will receive some radioactive material (called a “tracer”) to see how much energy the cells inside your body are using. During the scan you will lie on a narrow platform bed as it slides through the scanner, which is shaped like a large donut. The PET scanner creates detailed pictures that show how your organs and tissues are working.

Questions to ask:

1. Is this PET scan being done specifically for the research study or is it also a part of my regular medical care?
2. Where will I go for my PET scan?
3. How many scans will be needed?
4. Do I need to do anything special to prepare for the scan?
5. How will I receive the radioactive tracer?
6. What happens if the scan reveals a medical issue?
7. Will I receive the results of the scan?
8. How will my privacy be protected?
9. Will the results of this scan become part of my medical record?
10. What happens if I decide to leave the study early?



THE HARVARD CLINICAL
AND TRANSLATIONAL
SCIENCE CENTER



BOSTON
UNIVERSITY

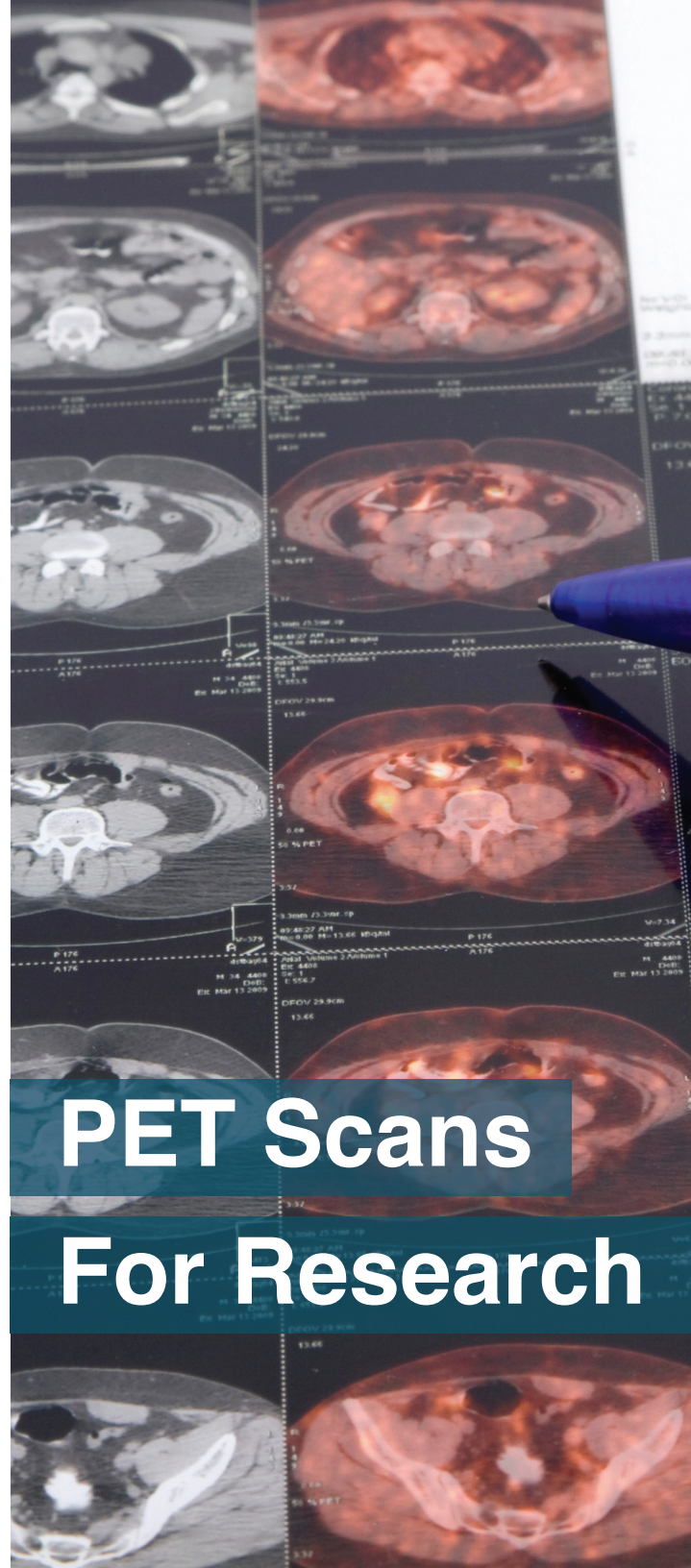
Tufts

CTSI

Tufts Clinical and
Translational
Science Institute

More questions?
Call:

version # (v1.0)



PET Scans For Research

This brochure contains general information for educational purposes and is not intended to provide medical advice. Talk with your doctor or research team before acting on any information contained herein for advice specific to your situation.



**Participating in research is your choice.
Be informed. Ask questions. Get answers.**

What's different about a PET scan used for research?

If you have a PET scan as part of your regular medical care, your doctor is usually trying to check your health or diagnose a problem. When a PET scan is part of a research study, scan is used to help answer a scientific question. It is not intended to provide you medical care or diagnose or detect health problems.

Unlike a standard PET scan where you and your doctor would discuss the results, the research team might not share the results of the PET scan with you. Your scans might be reviewed as part of a larger group of scans and not looked at individually.

Participating in research is a choice

Protections are in place to help assure the safety of research volunteers (also called "research subjects") and ensure volunteers are treated with respect. The research team will go over an Informed Consent Form with you. They will explain the study's goals and possible risks and benefits. Ask for help if you don't understand something. You should never feel rushed or pressured. Being part of a research study is completely voluntary – it's your choice. You can change your mind, at any time, for any reason.

How should I prepare for a PET scan?

Talk with the research staff so that you understand how to prepare for the PET scan. When a PET scan is part of research study, additional steps may be needed. The research team will go over this information with you. Make sure you understand what to expect before, during and after the scan.

What are the risks of undergoing a PET scan?

PET scans are considered to be quite safe and relatively painless. A small amount of radiation will be given to you and leaves the body in a few hours; there are small risks associated with radiation exposure. Specific risks will be described in detail in the Informed Consent Form. Make sure you understand those risk as they relate to the PET scan as well as to the overall research.

