

FDOPA PET/CT scanning of the brain

In a PET/CT study, positron emission tomography (PET) and computed tomography (CT) are performed at the same visit. PET scanning examines metabolism, while CT scanning provides a detailed image of body structures.

The PET/CT scanner has a wide opening (70 cm in diameter), so it can generally be used even for claustrophobic patients.

The scanning visit takes about 3 hours in all.

How to prepare

Please note the following instructions to prepare for your study:

- **Do not eat for at least 4 hours** before your appointment
- While you are fasting you may drink as much water as you like, but nothing else
- Chewing gum and pastilles are also forbidden on the day of the study
- Avoid physical exertion (bicycling, running or going to the gym) for 24 hours before the study
- Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours before the study
- Do not smoke for at least 2 hours before the study

Pregnant women do not normally have this procedure. If you think you may be pregnant, notify the PET Centre before you come in for the study.

Small children may not accompany you to the study visit.

Medications

Levodopa is suspended for 12 hours before the study.

You can take your prescribed medications as usual on the day of the study.

At the PET Centre, you receive 150 mg of oral carbidopa as premedication about an hour before the tracer is administered.

What to expect at your appointment

You will be asked to complete an interview form. A medical technician will review the study details with you.

- An intravenous cannula (drip) will be inserted in your lower arm to administer the tracer for the scan
- The tracer will be a radioactive substance used to measure metabolic activity in tissues
- After the tracer is administered, there will be a waiting period allowing it to accumulate in the area to be scanned. The wait time will be about an hour.
- You will need to keep still for the study to be successful
- The scanning takes about 20 minutes

After the study

The PET tracer is not associated with side effects. It does remain slightly radioactive for a few hours. We recommend drinking more water than usual after the scan because the tracer will leave your body in your urine.

On the day of the study avoid close contact with pregnant women and try to avoid holding or sitting next to children. The medical staff will instruct you in more detail.

Nursing mothers must not breast-feed for 10 hours after the study. Any breast milk pumped during this time should be poured down the drain.

The study results will be provided by a doctor at the ward or outpatient clinic that referred you.