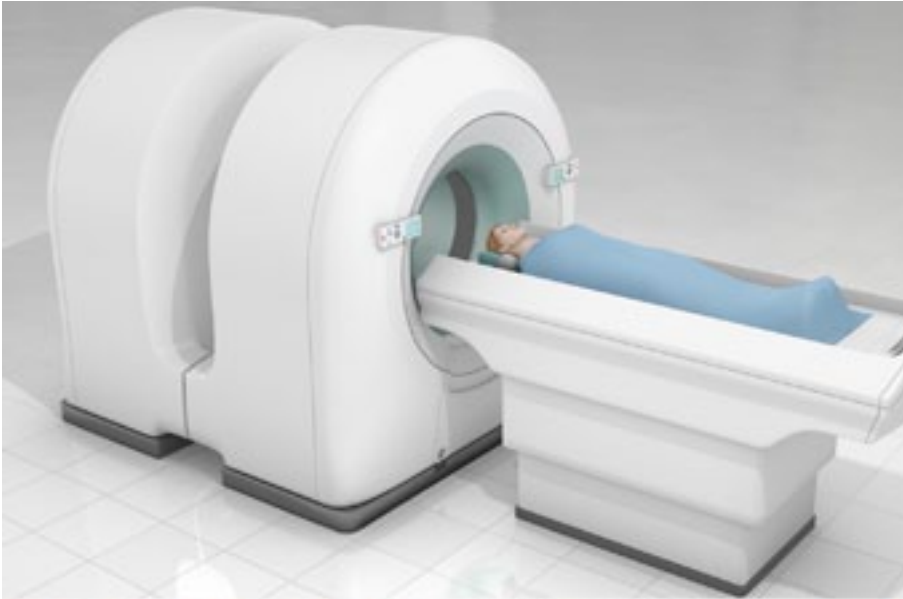




PET Scan (Positron Emission Tomography)



Overview

This scan lets doctors see inside your body. A PET scan is different from an MRI or a CT scan, because it shows how your organs and systems are working. It can give doctors a clear view of some types of cancer cells, which show up brightly on a PET scan. It can also help doctors diagnose other disorders throughout your body.

Preparation

Before you have a PET scan, you have to remove your glasses, jewelry, and other metal items. You may be given a gown to wear and medicine to relax you. You may be given a special dye to drink, or given it through an IV needle or other method. The dye helps the scanner see things in your body more clearly. You'll wait about an hour as the dye is absorbed into your system.

The Scan

To begin your scan, you lie on a table that slides into the opening of the PET scanner. The scanner is shaped like a ring. When it starts, you hear buzzing, clicking and whirring noises. The table slowly moves through the scanner. You must stay perfectly still so the machine can get a clear view. A scan usually takes about half an hour. If you move during the scan, the images will be blurry and it may need to be redone. A technician in a room next to you will watch you and the images being taken. The technician will talk to you through a speaker to let you know what is happening during your scan.

Review

When your PET scan is done, you can go home. Doctors will review the images and will talk to you about them at a followup appointment.

