



Cardiac PET/CT Stress Test

Myocardial Perfusion Imaging

Your physician has ordered a nuclear diagnostic study of your heart at Medical Clinic of Houston's accredited Nuclear Cardiac PET/CT Lab. Highly trained and experienced technologists using the latest imaging and computer technology will administer your study.

What is a Cardiac PET/CT exam?

Cardiac Positron Emission Tomography (PET) is a type of non-invasive nuclear imaging stress test in which blood flow to the heart muscle is visualized with a radioactive tracer and a special scanner. For decades, doctors have used cardiac PET scans to safely and accurately identify the presence or absence of coronary artery disease in those who have symptoms or risk factors. Your scan will utilize a PET scanner that is also equipped with a Computed Tomography (CT) scanner to enhance the images.

Pictures of the myocardial blood flow are taken before and after a pharmacologic stress test (instead of exercise) to determine if blood flow is restricted due to a narrowing of the coronary arteries. The resulting images provide detailed information about the condition and function of your heart that will help your physician determine the type of treatment, if any, you will need.

How do I prepare for a Cardiac PET/CT exam?

- Do not eat or drink anything with caffeine in it for 12-24 hours before your stress test, even decaf products.

- Items with caffeine include sodas, coffee, decaf coffee, tea, decaf tea, chocolate, Excedrin and certain cold or diet pills. (You may drink water)
- Do not eat anything 4-6 hours prior to the stress test unless you are diabetic.
- If you are diabetic, follow your normal regimen but eat light.
- You should continue to take ALL medications, unless your physician instructs you to do otherwise.
- If you use breathing inhalers, bring them to the test.

What to Expect on the Day of Your Test

- First, a small IV line will be placed in one of your arm veins. The IV will allow us to inject a small amount of a radioactive tracer so the PET/CT camera can take pictures of your heart.
- Next, a blood pressure cuff will be placed around your other arm to monitor your blood pressure during the test. Then electrodes will be placed on your chest to monitor your electrocardiogram throughout the test. (Men may need to have some of their chest hair shaved in order for the pads to adhere properly).
- The pads will be connected to an electrocardiograph (EKG) monitor so the electrical activity of your heart can be closely evaluated during the test.
- You will be asked to lie on a scanning table made especially for the PET/CT camera during the entire test. When the test begins you will keep your arms above your head (~20-30 minutes) while the camera rotates 360 degrees and takes 3D images of the blood flow to your heart. During this process, the stress medicine will be injected into your IV for stress images. If you experience any unusual symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest or arm pain, or lightheadedness at any time during the stress test, tell the technologist immediately. Symptoms usually subside within a few minutes.
- Most cardiac PET/CT studies are completed in less than one hour.

Please remember no caffeine or decaf products at least 12-24 hours prior to your scheduled appointment!

What are the risks of Cardiac PET/CT?

Cardiac PET/CT is safe for most people. If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant, or if you are a nursing mother, tell your doctor before you have this test.

After Your Test

Upon completion of the imaging, the IV line will be removed from your arm. You should not leave the clinic with the IV still in your arm.

You may resume your normal activities and medications as outlined by your physician.

Your physician will follow up with you regarding the results of your study.



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Appointment Date: _____

Appointment Time: _____