


# PET-CT AND YOU

A guide to your scan,  
your care, and what happens next



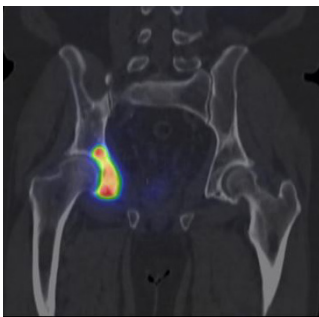
At Life Healthcare, we're committed  
to providing advanced medical  
imaging and compassionate,  
patient-centred care.  
Every step of the way.

# What is a PET-CT scan, and why does it matter?

A PET-CT\* scan combines two powerful technologies to give your doctors a clear and detailed view of your body. It shows not just where cancer is, but also how it's behaving.



The **CT scan** shows your body's structure, like a road map.



The **PET scan** highlights cell activity, like the traffic on those roads.

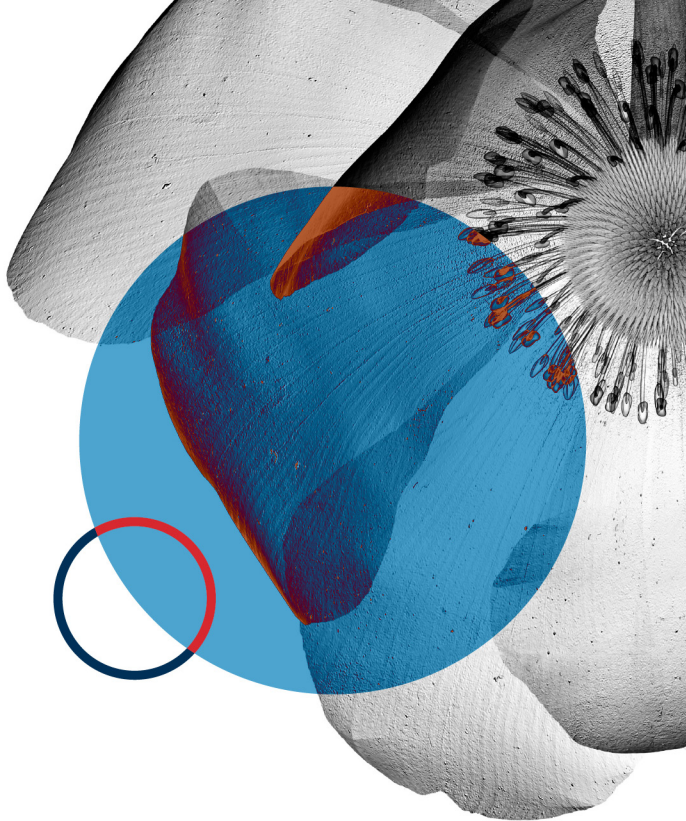
Cancer cells tend to use more glucose than healthy cells. PET-CT scans use safe, low-dose radioactive glucose (known as a radiotracer or tracer) to highlight where cells are most active. This helps doctors make better informed treatment decisions.

## WHERE PET-CT IS MOST USEFUL

- Lymphoma
- Breast cancer
- Prostate cancer
- Lung cancer
- Cervical and gynaecological cancers
- Colorectal cancer
- Melanoma
- Head and neck cancers
- Oesophageal cancer

**The scan helps your doctor understand how your cancer is behaving and what the next best step is for you.**

*\*Positron Emission Tomography — Computed Tomography*



## Getting ready for your scan

Your care team will give you clear instructions, but in general:

- Don't eat for 4–6 hours before the scan. Water is usually fine.
- Avoid strenuous activity the day before.
- Let your team know if you are diabetic or taking any chronic medication.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothes that have no metal fastenings on them.

# What to expect after your scan

Once the scan is complete, you can go home and resume most normal activities. Drinking lots of water helps flush the tracer from your body.

The scan will be reviewed by a nuclear medicine specialist and radiologist, and your doctor will contact you with the results within a few days.

Waiting for results can be tough. Some people even call it 'scanxiety'. Try to stay busy, talk to someone if you're feeling overwhelmed, and remember that this scan is giving your care team the information they need to move forward with clarity and confidence.

You can also try:

- **Preparing for your follow-up:** Schedule your next appointment or make a list of questions to ask your doctor about the results.
- **Staying informed:** Take the time to learn more about PET-CT scans and how they support your treatment plan.
- **Staying connected:** Reach out to support groups or online communities and forums where others share similar experiences.

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**Remember that this scan is giving your care team the information they need to move forward with clarity and confidence.**

# CLARITY

# Frequently asked questions



## **Is the scan painful?**

No. Aside from mild discomfort from the injection, the scan itself is painless, and generally quiet compared to other MRIs, which can be quite noisy.

## **Is it safe?**

Yes. The radiation is very low and leaves your body naturally within hours. You may be asked to avoid close contact with young children or people who are pregnant for the rest of the day as a precaution.

## **Will I feel any side effects?**

The tracer doesn't cause any sensations or discomfort, and side effects are rare.

## **Can I eat after the scan?**

Yes, you can return to your normal meals unless your doctor tells you otherwise. Staying hydrated helps flush the tracer out of your system more quickly.

## **You're in capable, caring hands**

At Life Healthcare, your scan is just one part of a carefully planned journey. Behind the scenes, radiographers, nuclear medicine specialists, radiologists, oncologists, and nurses work together to ensure that every decision is based on the most accurate information available.

We believe in personalised care, clear communication, and supporting you through every step.

To learn more about PET-CT or explore our patient-friendly resources, visit the Life Diagnostics and Life Oncology webpages, or speak to your Life Healthcare team.

