What is the patient preparation?

- NPO 6 hours prior to exam time.
- For patients with diabetes mellitus, meal times and medication may need to be altered.
- Radiologist must receive copies of recent radiographic films and reports.
- Have patient wear warm, comfortable clothing.

How do I order a PET/CT scan for my patient?

1. Decide which study to perform.
   Assess patient history to determine if study should be for diagnosis, staging or restaging.

2. Contact Quincy Medical Group your PET/CT provider.
   To schedule the patient, please have the following information available:
   - Patient history;
   - Diagnostic exams performed; and
   - Information about biopsies, surgery and therapy.

3. Inform the patient (IMPORTANT).
   Provide patient with information about the exam (i.e. a copy of the brochure entitled “Your PET/CT Exam," which includes date, time, and instructions for exam preparation).

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Positron Emission Tomography/Computed Tomography Imaging (PET/CT)

What is PET/CT?
PET/CT combines the functional information from a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) exam with anatomical information from a Computed Tomography (CT) exam in one single exam. A PET scan detects changes in cellular function - how cells are utilizing nutrients like sugar and oxygen. Since these functional changes take place before physical changes occur, PET can provide information that enables physicians to make an early diagnosis.

The advantage of CT is its ability to take cross sectional images of the body. These are combined with the information from the PET scan to provide more anatomic details of the metabolic changes in the body.

The PET exam pinpoint metabolic activity in cells and the CT exam provides an anatomical reference. When these two scans are fused together, the physician can view metabolic changes in the proper anatomical context of the body.

Does insurance cover PET/CT?
Yes, PET/CT imaging is covered by both Medicare and private insurance companies. Private insurance companies usually follow Medicare guidelines. However, many private insurance companies will cover indications not covered by Medicare.

What are the Medicare guidelines?

For Initial Treatment Strategy

One FDG-PET/CT study is reimbursable for beneficiaries who have solid tumors that are biopsy proven or strongly suspected based on other diagnostic testing when the beneficiary’s treating physician determines that the FDG-PET/CT study is needed to determine the location and/or extent of the tumor for the following therapeutic purposes related to the initial treatment strategy:

- To determine whether or not the beneficiary is an appropriate candidate for an invasive diagnostic or therapeutic procedure; or
- To determine the optimal anatomic location for an invasive procedure; or
- To determine the anatomic extent of tumor when the recommended anti-tumor treatment reasonably depends on the extent of the tumor.

For Subsequent Treatment Strategy

FDG-PET/CT is reimbursable when results improve physician decision making in the determination of subsequent antitumor treatment strategy or improves health outcomes in Medicare beneficiaries with the following tumor types: breast, cervix, colorectal, esophagus, head & neck (non-CNS/thyroid), lymphoma, melanoma, myeloma, non-small cell lung, ovary, and thyroid.