



What is a PSMA PET Scan?

A PSMA PET/CT scan is an imaging test used for the diagnosis and management of prostate cancer. PSMA stands for prostate-specific membrane antigen. PSMA is a protein found on the surface of prostate cancer cells and is a protein marker for visualizing active cancer in patients.

How Does PSMA Imaging Work?

In a PSMA PET/CT scan, a radioactive compound that specifically binds to the PSMA protein is used as a tracer. The scan detects the areas where this tracer accumulates, thus identifying active prostate cancer in the body.

Is NCPIC Experienced at Imaging Prostate PSMA?

Yes. NCPIC has been imaging with PSMA since 2021 and is one of the most prevalent sites in Northern California.

Is it FDA Approved? Is PSMA Covered by Insurance?

Yes. PSMA PET/CT imaging was first approved by the FDA in 2021. Medicare, began coverage in 2022. Private payer coverage guidelines vary. Call our staff with any questions.

I've heard of a PSA test, is PSMA and PSA the Same?

No. A PSA test is a blood test used to screen for PSA proteins which are made in the prostate gland. PSMA is a protein biomarker that is located on the outside of a prostate cancer cell and is not found in a blood test.

Is PSMA found in all Prostate Cancer Cells?

PSMA protein correlates to active prostate cancer cells and is found in approximately about 94% of men.

Who is eligible for a PSMA scan today?

PSMA PET/CT may be ordered by care teams for Initial Staging, Treatment Planning, or biochemical recurrence with rising PSA. Re-staging without a rising PSA is not covered.

How Does a PSMA PET/CT Compare to a standard CT?

According to researchers, a PSMA PET/CT scan has shown a considerably improved detection rate and higher specificity of active prostate cancer versus imaging with CT alone. This improvement has resulted in a change in treatment plans for nearly 50% of patients.

What kind of Pharmaceutical Isotope does NCPIC use?

NCPIC uses an imaging isotope that is called F-18 PSMA ("f" stands for fluorine). NCPIC chose F-18 as an imaging agent as research states it has a lower positron range, better image resolution and allows more flexible scanning versus other PSMA isotopes (versus Ga68 PSMA).

How many Men have Prostate Cancer in the USA?

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer among men, skin cancer being first. In 2023, an estimated 288,300 men in the United States were diagnosed with prostate cancer. Worldwide, an estimated 1,414,259 people were diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2020. It is the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer in the world.

Can I call NCPIC for more exam information?

Yes, please call NCPIC for any questions related to a PSMA PET/CT exam. NCPIC recommends speaking with your care teams to see if a PSMA exam is suitable for your medical needs.

Sources:

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