

What is an Amyloid PET Scan?

An amyloid [am-uh-loid] PET scan is a type of medical brain imaging approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Doctors use it to find a buildup of amyloid proteins in the brain. Your doctor may refer to these as amyloid plaques [plaks]. People with Alzheimer's disease have a buildup of these proteins.

How does it work?

The scan uses an imaging device called a PET scanner. It is a machine that is shaped like a doughnut. The scan also includes the use of a tiny amount of an FDA-approved solution called an imaging marker. The marker attaches to amyloid protein buildup in a person's brain and causes it to show up on the scan.

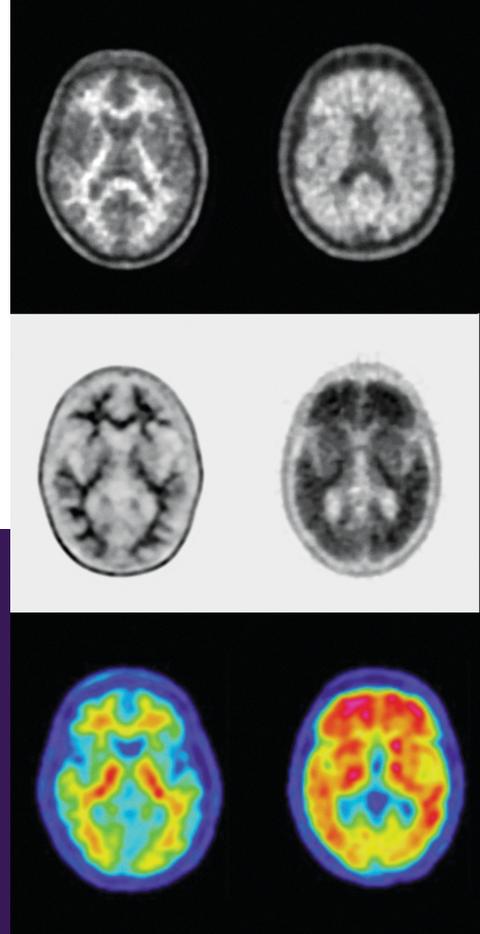


Photo Credit: Alzheimer's Association/ IDEAS-Study*

Why is an amyloid PET scan important?

- It helps doctors more accurately diagnose if a person's memory loss is caused by Alzheimer's disease, or by something else.
 - ★ This is especially important, because Alzheimer's medications can make memory and thinking worse if taken by people with other types of memory conditions.
- It can detect amyloid protein buildup in early stages of memory loss.
 - ★ This gives people with memory loss and their families time to prepare for the future.
- No other type of brain scan can find amyloid buildup in a living person.



Is it safe?

The amyloid PET scan is non-invasive and safe. Research has shown that:

- The risk of having the scan is very low compared to the benefit of knowing what is causing your memory loss and how to treat it.
- There is a small chance (1%-4%) of mild short-term side effects (pain at injection site, headache, dizziness, nausea).
- There is a very small risk of long-term side effects from the low dose of radiation exposure (similar to a CT scan).

What can I expect during an Amyloid PET Scan?

This outpatient procedure takes a total of about 1-2 hours to complete. You:

- can take your regular medicines the day of your appointment
- do not have to stop eating or drinking before your scan
- can have a loved one be with you up until the time you have the scan done

PET facilities can vary a bit, but generally the scan includes the following steps:

- 1** A member of the radiology staff with expertise in PET scans will be there to help you before, during, and after the scan.
- 2** You will be given a tiny amount of the imaging marker through an IV. It takes about 30-60 minutes for the marker to attach to any amyloid protein buildup in your brain. During this time, the staff member will have you lay back and relax, and make sure you are comfortable while you wait.
- 3** Once you are ready, the staff member will help you lay down on a padded table for the scan. The table will slowly move you into the scanner. You will be asked to be fairly still for a short period of time while the PET scanner takes images of your brain (10-20 minutes).
- 4** When the scan is complete, the radiology staff member will review your scan to make sure it is of good quality, and then you are all done!

What can I expect after the scan?

- You can carry on with your regular activities (unless your memory care doctor tells you differently).
- You will need to drink lots of water to wash the imaging maker out of your body. (Your local PET facility will send recommendations about fluid amounts to you before your appointment.)
- Your memory care doctor will contact you as soon as your amyloid PET scan results are available.
- You will go over the amyloid PET scan results with your memory care doctor at a follow-up visit and receive a personalized treatment plan.

Questions?

If you have any additional questions about having an amyloid PET scan, please talk with your memory care doctor.

