LIVING BEYOND BREAST CANCER®

A scan for estrogen receptors

What is an FES-PET scan?



An FES-PET scan is done in people with **estrogen-receptor positive metastatic breast cancer** (MBC) to show where cancer cells may have spread. It shows where estrogen receptors are present in the body. You and your doctor can use the results of an FES-PET scan and other test results to help make treatment decisions.

What to expect

- Tracer injection
- Wait about 1 hour 20 minutes
- Scan lasting 20-30 minutes
- Physician reads scan and writes a report (typically within a week)

What FES-PET shows

An FES-PET scan can be used along with other tests to learn:

- **where** in the body estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer has spread
- estrogen receptor **status** of breast cancer in areas that are difficult to biopsy, such as brain or bone metastasis or lobular ER+ breast cancer
- if the estrogen receptor status of a breast cancer site **has changed**

What to know

The **flouroestradiol (FES) tracer** binds to estrogen receptors. In contrast, a regular FDG-PET scan tracer shows cells that use more glucose than expected, which is common for cancer. Some cancer cells may not light up with the glucose tracer.

Hormonal therapies, such as tamoxifen or a SERD, can interfere with an FES-PET. See the chart below for timeframes your provider may recommend you pause a medication prior to an FES-PET scan. Always confirm with your doctor before stopping any medication.

"Once the results came back, they showed I have a mixture: Some areas were estrogen receptor-positive, but some were clearly ER-negative...It made a huge difference in which route we were going to take [with my treatment]"

– Tammy Uhl, Hear My Voice advocate

Common hormonal therapies for MBC	When to stop taking before an FES-PET?*
Aromatase inhibitors (e.g., anastrazole, letrozole, exemestane)	Can typically continue
Oral SERDs/PROTAC (e.g., elacestrant, imlunestrant, vepdegestrant)	4-11 days before the scan
Tamoxifen	8 weeks before the scan
Injectable SERD (fulvestrant)	28 weeks

**Washout times are based on five biological half-lives of each drug.*

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