

Two Different Types of Bone Scans

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Many prostate cancer patients receive a CT Scan and a Bone Scan as part of their initial staging and as part of their continued cancer evaluations. What they may not realize is that there are now 2 different types of Bone Scans a patient can receive. One is known to be more accurate, but is also less available, so you may have to ask for it and/or travel out of town. But at the very least, I'd like you to know your options.

No medical imaging is perfect. None have a 100% chance of finding cancer on a rising PSA. Each type of imaging has its own strengths and weaknesses depending on (1) what the imaging is looking for and (2) what area of the body it is imaging. So a good question to research and ask your physicians is – “How accurate is this scan in finding what we are looking for?” This honest information can often help you in your treatment decision-making.

The most common Bone Scan, which has been around for decades is the T99 or Technetium 99 Bone Scan. It has pretty good accuracy overall. But the **F18 (Sodium Fluoride) PET Bone Scan is known to have higher accuracy ([REF](#)).** It also takes longer to administer than the T99, is more expensive for insurance and gives the patient a little more radiation exposure. But if you are in a place in your cancer journey where finding the cancer is important to you, the F18 PET Bone Scan may be something you want to research and discuss with your physician(s).

Dr Snuffy Myers also talks about the difference in the accuracy between these 2 Bone Scans in his video – [Confusing](#)

Prostate Cancer Terms– (5 minutes into the video).

To find an F18 PET/Bone Scan in your area, you will have to do a little research. You can [search with your zip code here](#). It is likely that you will still need to call the facilities you find, as things often change. You can also call the National Oncologic PET Registry (NOPR) at **800-227-5463, ext. 4859** and ask for **Joy Brown**, administrator.

Medicare usually pays for the F18 PET Scan. Private insurance pays sometimes and sometimes it doesn't, so you will need to ask your insurance company.

Note – **A Bone Scan looks for cancer in the bone** or metastases. This is not to be confused with a **DEXA Scan or QCT, which looks for bone loss or osteoporosis**. This article discusses Bone Scans.