

Imaging scans can bring up a variety of emotions for most patients in their cancer journey. Preparing for imaging or waiting for results can cause distress. It makes a considerable difference to ease anxiety by being prepared.

Quotes

- "I found it helpful to focus on the noise of the machine and compare it to something familiar, like a garbage truck."*
- "Closing my eyes and mentally going to a peaceful place like Yosemite helped me get through the scan."*
- "Taking deep breaths and reciting a calming mantra like 'calm and relaxed' helped me stay calm during the procedure."*
- "I was able to lie down and have a fan blowing towards me."*
- "I got to choose from a couple scented aromatherapies and listened to the available music"*
- "I've learned the importance of not dwelling on the uncertain future... I choose to focus on the strength and courage I have within, finding solace in the present"*
- "...Finding coping mechanisms that work for you can make a big difference."*



Get In Touch

Let us know what has worked for you. The Patient & Family Cancer Support Center is here to help.

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UCSF Health

PREPARING FOR IMAGING

A Guide by Cancer Patients for Cancer Patients

Tips and Tricks to help navigate the stress and anxiety that comes with an upcoming scan.

Patient & Family Cancer Support Center

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# Preparing For The Scan

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## ***Staying Active***

- *Doing* activities and exercise.
- Spend time with family & friends.
- Find your relaxation techniques.
- Getting a good night's rest.

## ***Plan the Appointment***

- Having scans at the end of the week may lead to you getting the results days later because of the weekend.
- Schedule the scan at a time that doesn't interfere with personal activities.
- Check availability of UCSF imaging machines that have videos and a headset.

**If you need additional medical support prior to your scan, please reach out to your care team.**



# What You Can Request

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**A few things can be requested in the room to increase your comfortability throughout the scan.**

## ● **Cool Breeze**

A fan inside the MRI scanner can be turned on and adjusted to level that works for you.

## ● **Essential Oils**

The aroma of essential oils can be requested to help with relaxation.

## ● **Eye Cover**

If you're feeling claustrophobic, a sleep mask can be offered to cover your eyes for comfort.

## ● **Music & Ear Plugs**

For additional noise reduction, earmuffs and headphones with UCSF set music (if available) can be requested. Cancelling as much noise as possible is required for an MRI exam.

**Please do not bring your own supplies to your scan.  
The requested items are free and approved by UCSF.**



# Meditation

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Mentally go to some place that is peaceful for you. Take deep calming breaths and focus on relaxation.

The Patient & Family Cancer Support Center offers meditation tapes for free on our website.

# Connections & Support

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UCSF offers various forms of available support including our oncology social work team, psycho-oncology, support groups, peer support and more.

[cancer.ucsf.edu/crc](https://cancer.ucsf.edu/crc)