Imaging biomarkers in Alzheimer's disease

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Types of imaging modalities

Introduction to tau PET

(FDG) PET

Introduction to ^{18F}-fluorodeoxyglucose

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) use

Introduction to amyloid PET



Learning Zone

Types of imaging modalities



Neuroimaging findings to support a diagnosis of AD

Modality	Analyte	Abnormality	Pathology
MRI ¹	Regional anatomy	↓ hippocampal volume, temporal and parietal atrophy, and global brain atrophy ²	Neurodegeneration ^{1*}
PET	¹⁸ F-flortaucipir	↑ neocortex and temporal lobe uptake ³	Brain tauopathy ^{4,5}
PET	 ¹¹C-Pittsburgh compound B, (research only); ¹⁸F-Flutemetamol, ¹⁸F-Florbetaben, ¹⁸F-Florbetapir 	↑ cortical uptake ¹	Brain amyloidosis ¹
PET	¹⁸ F-fluorodeoxyglucose (FDG)	↓ metabolism in posterior cingulate-precuneus and temporoparietal cortex ¹	Neurodegeneration ^{1*}

*Neurodegeneration is not specific to the etiology of dementia and findings alone cannot be used to make a diagnosis of AD⁵ AD, Alzheimer's disease; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging; PET, positron emission tomography

1. Frisoni GB, et al. Neurobiol Aging 2017;52:119-131; 2. Frisoni GB, et al. Nat Rev Neurol 2010;6:67–77; 3. Schöll M, et al. Brain 2017;140:2286–2294; 4. Fleisher AS, et al. JAMA Neurol 2020;77:829–839; 5. Preische O, et al. Nat Med 2019;25:277–283



Learning Zone

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) use



MRI: most common scan types

- High-resolution 3D / volumetric T1-weighted images assessment of regional atrophy, namely of the hippocampus and lobes¹
- **T2-weighted images** detection of small vascular disease and visual rating of hippocampal atrophy^{1,2}
- FLAIR sequence detecting cerebral white matter hyperintensities, ischemic changes, and vascular pathologies²
- Gradient echo / T2* / susceptibility-weighted imaging detection of cerebral micro-hemorrhages or microbleeds, and cerebral superficial siderosis^{2,3}
- Diffusion-weighted imaging useful in cases of rapid cognitive decline suggestive of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and structural changes associated with the disease²

3D, three-dimensional; FLAIR, fluid-attenuated inversion recovery; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging

1. Frisoni GB, et al. Nat Rev Neurol 2010;6:67–77; 2. Harper L, et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2014;85:692–698; 3. Jetty SN, et al. J Clin Imaging Sci 2018;8:36



Visual inspection with MRI

Exclude brain pathology that may eventually be amenable to surgical intervention¹

Assess images for signal change utilizing FLAIR/T2 hyperintensity¹

Assess images for signal change utilizing T2* hypointensity to detect CMBs¹

Inspect gyral volume, hippocampal volume, ventricular size, white matter signal pattern, etc.²

> microhemorhages² Identify generalized

Identify blood products e.g.,

Assess images for cerebral atrophy utilizing T1-weighted sequences¹

Identify generalized atrophy; however, atrophy alone does not indicate a diagnosis of AD^{1,2}

Regardless of whether atrophy is present or absent, biomarker assessment (CSF or PET imaging) should be considered to confirm underlying pathology¹

*T2 hypointensities may also result from calcification, iron deposits, hemorrhagic metastasis or diffuse axonal injury.

CMB, cerebral microbleed; CSF, cerebrospinal fluid; FLAIR, fluid-attenuated inversion recovery; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging; PET, positron emission tomography

1. Harper L, et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2014;85:692–698; 2. Gaillard F, Sharma R, Amyloid related imaging abnormalities (ARIA). Reference article, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 07 Sep 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rlD-92312



Assessing atrophy

- Patterns of atrophy on structural imaging are generally indicative of the specific underlying pathology; this is considered a **neurodegenerative marker**
- Findings should be considered in the context of the patient's age and clinical findings

Focal hippocampal atrophy is the most established structural imaging biomarker of AD

However, focal hippocampal atrophy is also a feature of hippocampal sclerosis and FTLD



Case courtesy of Bruno Di Muzio, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 57096

Focal lobar atrophy

An asymmetric pattern of atrophy (left greater than right or vice versa) or more anterior than posterior atrophy is more suggestive of underlying FTLD pathology than AD



Case courtesy of Frank Gaillard, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 14321

Generalized atrophy

Global volume loss without focal lobar atrophy is a non-specific finding on structural MRI observed in normal aging and dementia; however, symmetric generalized atrophy is more typically observed in AD and DLB



Case courtesy of Gabrielle Matta, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 44422

AD, Alzheimer's disease; DLB, dementia with Lewy bodies; FTLD, frontotemporal lobar degeneration; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging

Left hand image, Di Muzio B, Alzheimer disease. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-57096. Middle image, Gaillard F, et al. Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopedia.org. Available from: https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-44422 (Accessed on 25 July 2023); Matta G, Asymptomatic severe global atrophy. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-44422 (Accessed on 25 July 2023); Matta G, Asymptomatic severe global atrophy. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-44422 (Accessed on 25 July 2023); Matta G, Asymptomatic severe global atrophy. Case study, Radiopaedia.org

Harper L, et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2014;85:692–698



Vascular changes are common in AD: detecting infarction

Lacunar infarct



Axial T2-FLAIR MRI shows left thalamic and infarct

Case courtesy of Botz B, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 95543

- Patients with lacunar infarcts develop dementia 4–12 times more frequently than the normal population¹
- Lacunar infarcts occur in deep gray and white matter²
- Radiologically 3–20 mm in size; round, oval, or slit-like²
- On CT, appear hypodense³
- On MRI, hypointense on T1 and hyperintense on T2²
- On FLAIR sequences, hypointense with a high signal rim²

Territorial infarct



Axial T2-FLAIR MRI shows acute right middle cerebral artery territory infarct involving right parietal lobe, including the lateral posterior right insular cortex

Case courtesy of RMH Core Conditions, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 34112

CT, computed tomography; FLAIR, fluid-attenuated inversion recovery; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging

Image on the left Botz B, Acute lacunar cerebral infarcts. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-95543, and image on the right from Conditions R, Right MCA territory infarct. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 26 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-94112

1. Loeb C, et al. Stroke 1992;23:1225–1229; 2. Guermazi A, et al. Neuroradiology 2007;49:1–22; 3. Harper L, et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2014;85:692–698



Vascular findings associated with cognitive decline



FLAIR, fluid-attenuated inversion recovery

Images used with permission from Grajauskas L, et al. Ageing Res Rev 2019;49:67–82



Cerebral microbleeds are common in AD: detecting microbleeds

- Cerebral microbleeds focal hypointensities on T2*-weighted or susceptibility-weighted images (SWI) representing hemosiderin deposition from microhemorrhage (less than 1 cm)^{1–4}
- Cerebral microbleeds appear in approximately 20% of AD cases⁵



Case courtesy of Mohamed Abdalla, Radiopaedia.org, rlD: 62065

AD, Alzheimer's disease

Image from Abdalla M, Cerebral amyloid angiopathy. Case study, Radiopaedia.org (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-62065

1. Mortimer AM, et al. Pract Neurol 2013;13:92–103; 2. Harper L, et al. J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry 2014;85:692–698; 3. Joseph-Mathurin N, et al. Neurology 2021;96:e1632–e1645; 4. Filippi M, et al. JAMA Neurol. 2022;79(3):291–304; 5. Sepehry AA, et al. AJNR Am J Neuroradiol 2016;37:215–222



Differentiating between dementia etiologies is complex owing to mixed pathologies (1/2)

Mixed pathologies are common: over 30% of patients with AD exhibit vascular comorbidity and 80% of DLB cases co-occur with AD.^{1,2} Thus, while imaging results can be used to aid diagnosis by highlighting structural changes, they are not diagnostic on their own

MRI findings related to aging and dementia are complex: several pathological processes can impact similar brain structures that mediate cognitive decline; therefore, differential pathologies can further complicate the diagnosis³

AD, Alzheimer's disease; DLB, dementia with Lewy bodies; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging

1. Jagtap A, et al. BGM 2015;7:43–56; 2. Karantzoulis S, Galvin JE. Expert Rev Neurother 2011;11:1579–1591; 3. Jagust W, et al. Ann Neurol 2008;63:72–80



Differentiating between dementia etiologies is complex owing to mixed pathologies (2/2)



Case courtesy of Frank Gaillard, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 92689

MRI (T1) Mild generalized cerebral atrophy in a patient with AD with bilateral hippocampal atrophy



Case courtesy of Frank Gaillard, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 25641

MRI (FLAIR) Extensive microvascular damage in vascular cognitive impairment



Case courtesy of Frank Gaillard, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 28163

MRI (FLAIR) Atrophy much more pronounced in frontal lobes in FTD



Case courtesy of Frank Gaillard, Radiopaedia.org, rID: 28774

MRI (FLAIR) Non-specific changes in DLB – generalized atrophy with no obvious focal predilection

AD, Alzheimer's disease; DLB, dementia with Lewy bodies; FLAIR, fluid-attenuated inversion recovery; FTD, frontotemporal dementia; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging

Images 1–4, left to right: Gaillard F, Alzheimer disease or LATE. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-92689 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023); Gaillard F, Vascular dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-25641 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Vascular dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia. Case study, Radiopaedia.org https://doi.org/10.53347/rID-28163 (Accessed on 25 Jul 2023) ; Gaillard F, Frontotemporal dementia.



Differentiating between dementia etiologies

Condition	Typical non-specific features observed on MRI	
Alzheimer's disease ¹	 Medial temporal lobe atrophy Parietal atrophy Ventriculomegaly Global volume loss 	
Behavioral frontotemporal lobar degeneration ¹	 Frontal, insula, and anterior temporal atrophy² Medial temporal lobe atrophy; often asymmetry Global volume loss³ 	
Vascular dementia / vascular cognitive impairment ¹	 Cortical and/or lacunar infarcts* Deep and periventricular white matter T2 hyperintensity / CT hypodensity* Global volume loss Mild medial temporal lobe atrophy 	
Dementia with Lewy bodies ¹	Global volume loss	
Limbic-predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy (LATE) ⁴	Hippocampal atrophy [†]	
Multiple system atrophy ⁵	Atrophy of putamen, middle cerebellar peduncle, pons, and/or cerebellum	
Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease ⁵	Cortical diffusion changes; pulvinar sign	

*Detecting vascular lesions does not mean the patient has vascular dementia; there is often multiple pathologies †Hyperintensity in the hippocampal region on a T2 or FLAIR image can help to differentiate between AD etiologies³

AD, Alzheimer's disease; CT, computed tomography; FLAIR, fluid-attenuated inversion recovery; LATE, limbic-predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging; TDP-43, TAR DNA-binding protein 43 1. Mortimer AM, et al. Pract Neurol 2013;13:92–103; 2. Seeley WW. Brain Struct Funct 2010;214:465–475; 3. Chan D, et al. Neurology 2001;57:1756–1763; 4. Nelson PT, et al. Brain 2019;142:1503–1527;

5. Frisoni GB, et al. Nat Rev Neurol 2010;6:67-77



Learning Zone

Introduction to amyloid PET





Introduction to amyloid PET

- In-vivo amyloid PET predicts the presence of significant Aβ pathology at autopsy and is considered a surrogate marker of brain amyloid pathology that is required for AD diagnosis^{1,2}
- The use of in-vivo tracers helps to establish biomarker relationships with changes in cognition and neurodegeneration, and support a diagnosis³
- Increased retention of amyloid radiotracers indicates the presence of fibrillar aggregates of $A\beta^3$
 - A positive amyloid PET result alone is not sufficient to diagnose AD, and amyloid PET radiotracers should be combined with other diagnostic tools, such as clinical evaluation and structural imaging, for an accurate diagnosis³

Aβ, amyloid beta; AD, Alzheimer's disease; PET, positron emission tomography

1. Clark CM, et al. JAMA 2011;305:275–283; 2. Klunk W. Neurobiol Aging 2011;32:S20–S36; 3. Villemagne VL, et al. Nat Rev Neurol 2018;14:225–236



Introduction to amyloid PET tracers^{1–3}

- A positive amyloid PET scan using ¹⁸F-florbetapir, ¹⁸F-florbetaben, or ¹⁸F-flutemetamol indicates the presence of moderate-to-frequent amyloid neuritic plaques, but does not independently establish a diagnosis of AD
- All three radiotracers show high non-specific binding in white matter
- Detection of amyloid for all three radiotracers relies on the loss of the normal contrast between white and gray matter due to amyloid accumulation in the cortex
- Specific criteria for a positive scan for each amyloid radiotracer are presented in the package inserts and are reviewed in online training courses provided by the radiotracer manufacturers

AD, Alzheimer's disease; PET, positron emission tomography

^{1.} AMYViD[®] (¹8F-florbetapir) highlights of prescribing information. 2012. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2012/202008s000lbl.pdf (Accessed December 17, 2021); 2. Neuraceq[®] (¹8F-florbetaben) Highlights of prescribing information. 2014. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2014/204677s000lbl.pdf (Accessed June 12, 2023); 3. VIZAMYL[®] (¹8F-flutemetamol) package insert. 2013. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2014/204677s000lbl.pdf (Accessed June 12, 2023); 3. VIZAMYL[®] (¹8F-flutemetamol) package insert. 2013. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2016/203137s005lbl.pdf (Accessed June 12, 2023); 3. VIZAMYL[®] (¹8F-flutemetamol) package insert. 2013. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2016/203137s005lbl.pdf (Accessed June 12, 2023); 3. VIZAMYL[®] (¹8F-flutemetamol) package insert. 2013. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2016/203137s005lbl.pdf (Accessed June 12, 2023); 3. VIZAMYL[®] (¹8F-flutemetamol) package insert. 2013. Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2016/203137s005lbl.pdf (Accessed June 12, 2023)



¹⁸F-flutemetamol (VIZAMYL[™])



Key supportive findings¹

 Comparison of PET scan reading by five blinded, electronically trained readers from the 68 subjects showed sensitivity of 93% (95% CI 86, 93) and specificity of 84% (95% CI 60, 92)

CI, confidence interval; PET, positron emission tomography

This research was originally published in JNMT. Mantel E, Williams J. J Nucl Med Technol 2019;47:203–209. © SNMMI

1. Vizamyl- Prescribing Information. December 2019; Available from: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2020/203137s013lbl.pdf



¹⁸F-florbetaben (Neuraceq[™])



Key supportive findings¹

 Comparison of PET scan reading by five blinded, electronically trained readers from 82 subjects with histopathology assessment at autopsy showed sensitivity of 96% (95% CI 90, 100) and specificity of 77% (95% CI 47, 80)

CI, confidence interval; PET, positron emission tomography

Images used with permission from Jovalekic A, et al. Eur J Nucl Med Mol Imaging. 2023 Jun 10. doi: 10.1007/s00259-023-06279-0. Epub ahead of print (CC-BY 4.0: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Neuraceq[™] Prescribing Information. March 2014; Available from: <u>https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2014/204677s000lbl.pdf</u>



¹⁸F-florbetapir (AMYViD[™])



Key supportive findings¹

- Binding studies in post-mortem brains showed significant correlations between *in vitro* ¹⁸F-florbetapir binding and Aβ aggregate deposition
- A blinded pivotal study in 59 end-of-life patients resulted in a majority read sensitivity of 92% (95% CI 78, 98) and specificity of 100% (95% CI 80, 100)

Aβ, amyloid beta; CI, confidence interval; PET, positron emission tomography This research was originally published in JNMT. Trembath L, et al. J Nucl Med Technol 2015;43:175–184. © SNMMI 1. Amyvid- Prescribing Information. December 2019; Available from: <u>https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2019/202008s036lbl.pdf</u>



Learning Zone

Introduction to tau PET



Tau PET

- ¹⁸F-flortaucipir (¹⁸F-AV-1451) has been approved by the FDA¹
- Increased retention of tau tracers is indicative of the presence of neurofibrillary tangles²
- Other tau radiotracers in development include, <u>but are not</u> <u>limited to</u>:*
 - ¹⁸F-MK-6240³⁻⁵
 - ¹⁸F-RO-948^{4,5}
 - ¹⁸F-PI-2620⁵
 - ¹⁸F-GTP1⁵
 - ³H-JNJ-067⁴



 ¹⁸F-flortaucipir SUVR images (80–100 min) superimposed onto subject's MRI in transaxial (top row) and coronal (bottom row) views.⁶
 The brighter the red color, the greater the SUVR indicating greater the tau deposition

*These tracers are not yet approved for clinical use

AD, Alzheimer's disease; FDA, Food and Drug Administration; HV, healthy volunteer; MMSE, Mini-Mental State Examination; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging; PET, positron emission tomography; SUVR, standardized uptake value ratio Image used with permission from: Barret O, et al. J Nucl Med 2017;58:1124–1131

1. FDA. Press release. May 28, 2020. Available from: https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-drug-image-tau-pathology-patients-being-evaluated-alzheimers-disease (Accessed June 12, 2023); 2. Gordon BA, et al. Brain 2019;142:1063–1076; 3. Lohith TG, et al. J Nucl Med 2019;60:107–114; 4. Yap SY, et al. Brain 2021;144:2284–2290; 5. Leuzy A, et al. Mol Psychiatry 2019;24:1112–1134; 6. Barret O, et al. J Nucl Med 2017;58:1124–1131



Tau PET shows regional distribution of elevated brain tau



Braak staging

Stage 0: no detectable tangle accumulation.

Stage I: tangles limited to the transentorhinal cortex

Stage II: tangles spread into the neighboring hippocampus

Stage III and IV: tangle burden increased in these earlier stage regions and appear in the temporal neocortex.

Stage V: extended involvement in association cortices in stage V and extended into the primary sensory areas by **stage VI**

AD, Alzheimer's disease; PET, positron emission tomography

Image used with permission from: Therriault J, et al. Nat Aging. 2022;2(6):526–535. (CC-BY 4.0: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



First-generation tau PET tracers: ¹⁸F-flortaucipir

- ¹⁸F-flortaucipir is one of the most widely used tracers¹
 - It has high selectivity for PHF-tau over Aβ,² and binding correlates with CSF p-tau levels³
 - It has been validated in autopsy as a reliable biomarker to detect advanced AD pathology^{1,4}
 - It has off-target binding to choroid plexus, basal ganglia, neuromelanin and melanin-containing cells (substantia nigra, pigmented cells in the eye, leptomeninges), and to areas of hemorrhage, which can complicate routine application^{2,5}

AD, Alzheimer's disease; CSF, cerebrospinal fluid; PET, positron emission tomography; PHF, paired helical filament; p-tau, phosphorylated-tau

1. Soleimani-Meigooni DN, et al. Brain 2020;143:3477–3494; 2. Brosch JR, et al. Neurotherapeutics 2017;14:62–68; 3. Zhao Q, et al. Front Neurol 2019;10:486; 4. Fleisher AS, et al. JAMA Neurol 2020;77:829–839; 5. Leuzy A, et al. Mol Psychiatry 2019;24:1112–1134



Second-generation tau PET tracers

Second-generation tau PET tracers^{1,2}

- ¹⁸F-RO-948
- ¹⁸F-MK-6240
- ¹⁸F-PI-2620
- ¹⁸F-GTP1
- ¹⁸F-JNJ-067

- Tau PET tracers other than flortaucipir have been developed; these are still being researched and are not yet approved for routine clinical use
 - In general, the newer tau PET tracers have lower off-target binding compared to first-generation tracers (eg ¹⁸F-flortaucipir) and have a high contrast between normal brains and areas with tau deposition; they may prove more sensitive for detection at low levels of tau²
 - Although off-target binding is low,^{1,2} such binding is nevertheless present and can complicate routine clinical applications²

PET, positron emission tomography

1. Leuzy A, et al. JAMA Neurol 2020;77:955–965; 2. Yap SY, et al. Brain 2021;144:2284–2290



Desirable characteristics of tau imaging agents



A β , amyloid beta; PHF, paired helical fragment

1. Brosch JR, et al. Neurotherapeutics 2017;14:62–68; 2. Dickstein LP, et al. Eur J Nucl Med Mol Imaging. 2011;38:352–357.



Learning Zone

Introduction to FDG PET



Brain ¹⁸FDG PET examination

- FDG is a glucose analog, and its uptake in the brain reveals patterns of metabolism¹
- Brain FDG PET is useful in the evaluation of suspected neurodegenerative disease and can
 aid in the specific diagnosis of dementia¹
- FDG PET is primarily indicative of synaptic activity,¹ with preclinical studies showing that its uptake correlates with the synaptic protein synaptophysin²
- A normal brain FDG PET scan has high negative predictive value; patients with a negative result have a decreased likelihood of receiving an AD diagnosis within 5 years³

AD, Alzheimer's disease; FDG, fluorodeoxyglucose; PET, positron emission tomography

1. Johnson KA, et al. Cold Spring Harb Perspect Med 2012;2:a006213; 2. Rocher AB, et al. Neuroimage 2003;20:1894–1898; 3. Jagust W, et al. Neurology 2007;69:871–877



Regional pattern of neurodegeneration across different dementia etiologies

FDG PET as a neuroimaging marker is not specific to a particular dementia etiology, but **rather an identifier of regional neurodegeneration**¹

 Although there is some variability and overlap, each disease has a typical regional pattern of hypometabolism caused by the typical regional pattern of neurodegeneration



AD, Alzheimer's disease; CBD, corticobasal degeneration; DLB, dementia with Lewy bodies; FDG PET, fluorodeoxyglucose positron emission tomography; FTD, frontotemporal dementia; PD, Parkinson's disease; PSP, progressive supranuclear palsy; SMA, sensorimotor area and middle temporal gyrus

Image used with permission from Teune LK. Francesco Signorelli and Domenico Chirchiglia, IntechOpen, 2013. DOI: 10.5772/56505. (License: CC BY 4.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1. Teune LK. Francesco Signorelli and Domenico Chirchiglia, IntechOpen, 2013. DOI: 10.5772/56505.

Available from: https://www.intechopen.com/books/functional-brain-mapping-and-the-endeavor-to-understand-the-working-brain/fdg-pet-imaging-in-neurodegenerative-brain-diseases (Accessed June 12, 2023)



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