

C.T. Scan with Contrast

What Is A C.T. Scan?

C.T. (computed tomography), sometimes called CAT scan, uses special x-ray equipment to obtain image data from different angles around the body, and then uses computer processing of the information to show a cross-section of body tissues and organs. CT imaging is particularly useful because it can show several types of tissue such as heart, lung, bone, soft tissue and blood vessels. Your C.T. Scan will be performed with contrast. This simply means you will be given contrast through an I.V. to enhance the C.T. Scan images to allow better and more detailed visualization.

What Does The C.T Scanner Look Like?

The C.T. scanner is a large, square machine with a hole in the center, something like a doughnut. You will lie still on a table that can move up or down, and slide into and out from the center of the hole. You will hear a loud whirring noise and a high-pitched sound during the scanning process.

What Should You Expect During the C.T. Scan?

The actual C.T. scan causes no pain. A staff member will escort you to the C.T. room and ask several questions about your health and history. Your blood pressure will be taken, you will be placed on a cardiac monitor and a small IV will be inserted into your arm. When the contrast is injected, some people report feeling a flush of heat and sometimes a metallic taste in the mouth. These sensations usually disappear within a minute or two. If you experience any itching or shortness of breath, even if it is mild, let the staff know immediately. These can be indications of a reaction to the contrast material that would be treated. With the safety of the newest contrast materials, these effects are very rare.

You will be alone in the room during the actual scan, however, the staff can see, hear and speak with you at all times. The amount of time you will spend at the physician's office is approximately 90 minutes.

How Should You Prepare For The C.T. Scan?

Please arrive at least ½ hour prior to your scheduled scan. If your C.T. scan is with contrast, do not eat for 4 hours prior to the exam (if you have diabetes, juice and small snacks may be taken to keep your blood sugar up). You will also need a blood test done (***please check with the staff at the time you schedule your C.T. Scan appointment to obtain a laboratory slip***). This blood work should be done at least two days prior to the test.

Women should always inform their doctor and staff if there is any possibility that they are pregnant.

What Should You Do After The C.T. Scan?

You may resume your normal daily activities. You should also: (1) drink plenty of fluids to help flush the contrast out of your system, (2) observe the site where your IV was for any signs of infection (swelling, redness & heat), (3) call the doctor's office if you have any abnormal itching, hives or shortness of breath.

YOUR APPOINTMENT IS SCHEDULED ON _____ AT _____

Please arrive at _____.

Please read the next page for additional important information!!!

Preparation for the C.T. Scan with contrast.

Please Do:

- Arrive at the doctor's office at least ½ hour prior to your scheduled scan.
- Drink plenty of water the day before the test and the day of the test. 8 to 10 ounces of water every hour while you are awake is recommended. This fluid helps assure that your kidneys are functioning well and helps to facilitate the contrast to be “flushed” out of your body after the test.
- Continue to take your medications unless your physician has instructed you otherwise. Even though you are not supposed to eat prior to the test, you still need to take your medications. **HOWEVER**, if you have diabetes, it is okay to adjust your medications according to your eating schedule.
- Get any blood drawn at the laboratory at least two days before the date of your test.
- Additional Instructions:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

Please Do Not:

- Please **Do Not** eat food for 4 hours before the scheduled test time. Please continue to drink water as noted above.

This test may have some out of pocket costs. Please check with your insurance company for any remaining balance you may be responsible to pay.