

What is a CT or CAT Scan?

CT, which stands for Computed Tomography (sometimes referred to as a “CAT” scan), is a fast, painless diagnostic tool doctors can use to see inside the body. Physicians use the information they get from a CT scan to rule out or confirm the presence of certain abnormalities or diseases.

How Does a CT work?

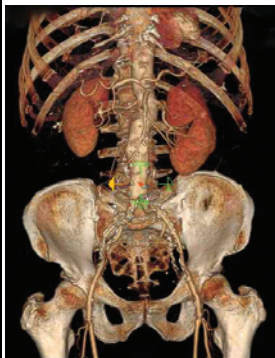
CT uses X-rays in conjunction with advanced computer technology to generate very accurate and detailed images of your internal organs, and structures. A CT scanner creates accurate detailed images of your bones, organs, blood vessels and even your heart, in extraordinarily fine detail.

What Should I Expect?

CT is a painless, non-invasive test that will not hurt at all. During your exam, a technologist will step into a control room to conduct the actual exam. You may notice a mechanical noise coming from the scanner. This is just the X-ray tube being activated and rotating around your body. Your exam might require that a contrast agent be given



intravenously that will make your blood vessels and tissues more visible. You will then be asked to lie perfectly still once the technologist has positioned you appropriately on the table. You may also be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds during the exam. Any movement might require the exam to be repeated. The length of your CT exam depends on which particular study, or studies, your doctor has ordered. Most exams are quick, lasting just a few minutes. You may be asked to arrive at the facility 15 or 30 minutes prior to your scheduled exam time.



What is a contrast agent?

A contrast agent is a liquid substance that makes certain tissues stand out more clearly against their surroundings,



enabling the finest details to show up on the CT scan, improving diagnostic accuracy. You may be given the contrast agent intravenously or orally. In all cases the contrast agent will

leave your body naturally within a few hours. If your exam does require a contrast agent, be sure to tell the technologist if you have any allergies, especially to iodine or shellfish.

How do I need to prepare for my CT scan?

How you prepare for your CT scan depends on what part of the body is being examined and the protocols used in your particular facility. In some cases the staff may ask you to change into a hospital gown for the exam. And you may be asked not to eat or drink anything before your exam.



Are there any people who shouldn't get CT scans?

If you are pregnant, think you might be pregnant, or have allergies to iodine, you should inform your doctor and CT technologist prior to your exam.

How will I find out the results?

Your CT scan is supervised and interpreted by a sub-specialized radiologist, a physician specially trained in reading CT scans and other diagnostic images. The radiologist will interpret the findings of your CT and prepare a report for your referring physician. You should receive the results from the physician who sent you for your diagnostic study.

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