

CT Scan – Computed Tomography

Patient Information

What is a CT Scan?

Computed Tomography (CT or CAT) is a specialised and widely used x-ray and computer procedure for obtaining cross sectional images of body organs. The CT scan does not replace conventional x-rays but gives additional information with greater detail.

Why do you need a CT Scan?

There are various reasons for the procedure, your doctor would need to explain why it is necessary for you.

Prior to the Procedure

1. Depending on the area to be examined, you may be required to fast from fluids, food or both. For examinations of the abdomen, you will be required to drink a liquid. Since the preparation varies with each examination, it is important that you ask our staff what you may be required to do before the procedure, when making the appointment.
2. If you are a diabetic, asthmatic, suffer severe allergies, are pregnant or have had an adverse reaction to an x-ray contrast (dye), please inform our staff when making your appointment.
3. Wear comfortable clothing.
4. Bring your referral, previous x-rays and any other relevant scans for comparison.
5. Bring your Medicare Card, Pension/Healthcare Card, Veteran's Affairs Card and insurance details if applicable.

The Procedure

1. A member of staff will explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have.
2. The examination may last 15 minutes to 1 hour. This can be confirmed when making your appointment.
3. You may be taken to a private room to change into a gown.
4. You may need an injection of contrast (dye). This is given either into a vein in the elbow or on the back of the hand. This clear liquid is used to help show certain organs in more detail.
5. The radiographer or nurse will ask you to lie on a special table. This table slowly moves through a circular opening in the scanner. You may have soft restraints (eg a pillow or foam pads) placed around your body to help you keep still and provide clearer x-ray detail.
6. Additionally, you may be asked to hold your breath briefly at certain points in the procedure to avoid blurred film images.
7. The examination is painless. However, if you are feeling anxious or unwell during the procedure you can communicate by microphone with the radiographer, who views the whole examination through a window.

Results

A radiologist (a specialised doctor trained to read CT scans) will view the images and write a report for your referring doctor.

Questions

This brochure is provided to help you understand the CT Scan - Computed Tomography procedure.

If you have any questions prior to your examination, you can speak with a member of our staff by phoning Patient Services on **132 336**

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