

WHAT IS CT?

A CT scanner is a special x-ray machine which produces an image of a 'slice' of the body. The scanner consists of a 'doughnut' shaped structure or gantry, through which you pass on a couch. A narrow fan shaped beam of x-rays is produced from inside the gantry and rotates in a complete circle around you.

The x-rays pass through your body and are detected by electronic sensors on the other side of the gantry. The information passes to a computer which produces an image of the internal structure of your body.

It takes about a second to produce each slice, which can vary in thickness from 1 millimeter to one centimeter; depending on which part of your body is being scanned it may take up to a minute.

BEFORE THE SCAN

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING MY SCAN?

- You may be required to remove some clothing or jewellery before your scan. This will be dependent on the area to be scanned. You will be provided with a hospital gown if necessary.
- Before your scan you may be asked if there is any possibility of pregnancy, if you are a diabetic, have asthma or any allergies.
- During the scan you will need to lie on the x-ray couch and keep as still as possible. The radiographer will make sure you are as comfortable as possible before the scan begins.
- You may need to have an injection of a special 'dye' or contrast agent either before or during your scan. This will usually be into a vein at your elbow and is similar to having a blood test. This 'dye' can sometimes give you a warm feeling for a short time as it is injected.

WILL IT BE UNCOMFORTABLE?

No. Most patients do not mind lying with part of their body within the 'doughnut', but if this makes you feel apprehensive do tell the radiographer straight away.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

If you are given fluid to drink when you arrive, you will usually have to wait for between half an hour and an hour before we can start your scan. The scan itself will usually take around 20 minutes. Please allow an additional 30 minutes in case of emergencies.

CAN I BRING A RELATIVE OR FRIEND WITH ME?

Yes, but they will not be able to come into the scan room with you whilst the scan is being performed.

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

Not usually. You can drive home afterwards and may return to work as necessary. You will be able to eat and drink normally.

The Radiographer will explain to you what will happen during your scan and you will be able to ask any questions that you might have.

You may be asked to have nothing to eat or drink for about two hours before your appointment time. For scans of the abdomen and pelvis you may be asked to drink up to a litre of fluid to outline the bowel.

A blood test may be necessary to check your creatinine level (kidney function) before administering any IV contrast.

- The couch will be moved into the scanner so that the part of your body being examined is inside the 'doughnut'.
- The Radiographer will take the pictures from the control room, but you will be able to talk to them via an intercom, and they will be watching you all the time. If, at any time, you feel any discomfort or apprehension you should mention it to the Radiographer immediately.

WHEN YOU COME FOR YOUR TEST, PLEASE BRING:

- A list of your medicines, including over the counter drugs, and herbal drugs.
 - A list of allergies to food, latex, or medicine.
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PRECAUTIONS

- Tell the doctor or Radiographer if you've ever had an allergic reaction to a contrast enhancing agent, iodine.
- CT scanning exposes you to some radiation. If you are pregnant, or think you might be, or if you are breastfeeding, tell the doctor and Radiographer before your test, preferably when your appointment is being made

ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO HAVING A CT SCAN?

- CT scanning does use x-rays and so has the usual risks associated with ionising radiation. The scan is always risk appropriate and assessed by a consultant radiologist in advance of approving the scan. ***Female patients who are, or might be pregnant must inform a member of staff before their scan.***
- There is also a very small risk that you

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SCAN?

- When your scan is finished the Radiologist will review all your images.
- If you are taking medications for diabetes you will be given special instructions after your scan
- Your report will then be posted to you doctor.
- You should contact your doctor for your results.
- Please allow 2 to 3 working days for the report to get to your doctor

CT SCAN



may be allergic to the 'dye' that may be injected during your scan. However, all the necessary medications required are always at hand if this rare event occurs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address: UPMC Whitfield Cancer Centre,
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