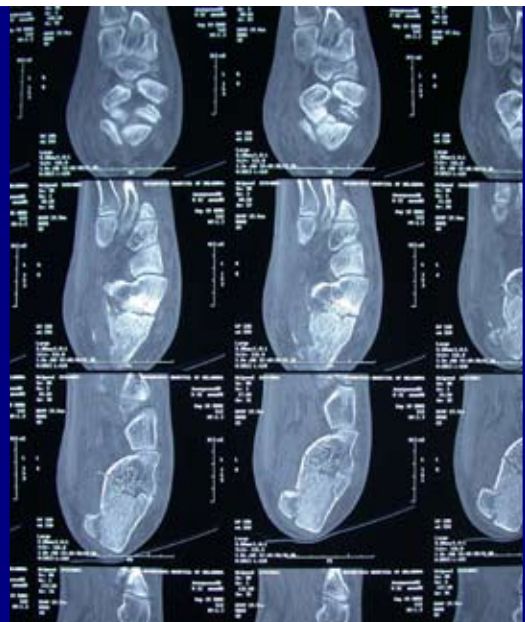


What is a CT Scan?

A computed tomography (CT) scan uses X-rays to make detailed pictures of structures inside the body.



Common uses of the procedures

CT scans are used to study areas of the head, spine, body, arms or legs. A CT scan is used to find problems in the following areas including tumors, blockages or disease.

- Chest and lungs
- Abdomen to include liver, pancreas and spleen
- Urinary tract, kidneys and adrenal glands
- Pelvis and bladder
- Brain
- Gallbladder and bile ducts
- Spine
- Any area of the arms or legs

Risks

The chance of a CT scan causing a problem is small.

There is a chance of an allergic reaction to the dye (contrast material).

If you have diabetes and take certain medications, the dye could cause problems. Your doctor or technologist will tell you when to stop taking your medication and when to start taking it again after the test so you will not have problems.



Columbus
Community Hospital

YOUR GUIDE TO

Computed Tomography





Benefits

CT Scan is a noninvasive imaging technique. The details of images taken using a CT Scan are an invaluable tool in the early diagnosis and evaluation of many diseases.

What does the equipment look like?

During the test, you will lie on a table that is attached to the CT scanner, which is a large doughnut-shaped machine. The CT scanner sends X-rays through the body area being studied. Each rotation of the scanner takes less than a second and provides a picture of a thin slice of the organ or area being examined.



How is the procedure performed?

A CT scan is done by a radiologic technologist. The pictures are interpreted by a radiologist, who dictates the report your doctor will receive. Other doctors, such as a family medicine doctor, specialist, internist, or surgeon also may review the CT scan.

You may need to take off all or most of your clothes and jewelry, depending on which area is being studied. You may be able to wear your underwear for some scans. You will be given a gown and robe to use during the test.

During the test, you will lie on a table that is attached to the CT scanner, which is a large doughnut-shaped machine.

The table slides into the round opening of the scanner, and the scanner moves around your body. The table will move slowly while the scanner takes pictures. You may hear a click or buzz as the table and scanner move. It is very important to lie very still during the test.

During the test, you may be alone in the scanning room. However, the technologist will watch you through a window. You will be able to talk to the technologist through an intercom.

If dye (contrast material) is needed, it will be given in one of several ways, depending on the body area being studied.

- Contrast material may be given in a vein (IV) in the arm for chest, stomach, brain and pelvic CT scans.
- You will drink contrast material for abdominal and pelvic CT, or it may be put through a tube into your rectum.

A CT scan usually takes 2 to 3 minutes. Waiting for oral contrast to move through your system may take an hour. Appointments are scheduled for 30 minute time-slots to allow for prepping patient, starting IVs, etc.

Drink lots of liquids for 24 hours after the scan to help flush the dye out of your body.

Computed tomography (CT or CAT scan) of the brain



How should I prepare?

If you have a CT scan of your abdomen or pelvis, you may be asked to not eat any solid foods starting the night before your scan. For most CT scans of the abdomen, you will drink contrast material. For some CT scans, you may need a laxative the night before or an enema before the test.

Talk to your doctor about any concerns you have regarding the need for the test, its risks, how it will be done, or what the results will mean.

What will my experience be like?

You will not have pain from the scanning. The table you lie on may feel hard and the room may be cool. There may be some discomfort associated with the contrast administration.

Some people feel nervous inside the CT scanner.

If medicine or dye (contrast material) is used, an IV is usually put in your hand or arm. You may feel a quick sting or pinch when the IV is started. The dye may make you feel warm and flushed and give you a metallic taste in your mouth. Tell the technologist or your doctor how you are feeling.