

CT SCAN

INFORMATION SHEET

What is a CT scan?

CT stands for computed tomography. A special machine and powerful computers use x-rays to form highly detailed pictures of your body and internal organs. The radiologist can look at these in multiple ways including in 3D to help come to a diagnosis.

What preparation is required?

Abdomen and Pelvis: No food for at least 2 hours. Can drink water and take medications.

Please arrive 1 hour prior to appointment for further preparation.

CT colonography: Your large bowel needs to be cleansed before the test. This requires you to follow a strict diet and take certain medications starting two days before the test. There are detailed instructions outlining this that will be given to you along with your medications. The medications will make you need to go to the toilet much more frequently than normal. You should not have this test if you are pregnant. If you have diabetes, kidney or heart problems you should inform your referring doctor, and Clarity Imaging prior to starting the preparations, as the preparations may need to be changed.

All other CT examinations: No food for at least 2 hours. Can drink water and take medications.

What happens during a CT scan?

The radiographer will call you in and confirm your name. If you are having a dye (contrast) injection you will be asked to fill out and sign a questionnaire. It is important to answer these questions accurately. The dye injection is very safe, but there is a small risk of an allergic reaction. Diabetics and people with poor kidney function (renal failure) may need to have extra precautions taken. You may be asked to change into a gown and/or remove jewellery as appropriate to the examination. You will then lie on a bed which slides through the CT scanner. After preparation, the scan usually takes 15 minutes or less.

Complications

There is a small risk of an allergic reaction to the dye injection. In rare cases this is severe. Our staff are trained to treat contrast reactions, including using adrenalin if necessary. If you have had a reaction in the past, please inform the staff, as this usually prevents you from having a further injection. If you are a diabetic and taking metformin (also called Diabex, Diaformin, Formet etc.) you will receive special instructions to follow afterwards.

When can I expect the results of the CT scan?

As a rule, all CT scans are reported by our radiologists the same day, at which point the doctor who requested the procedure will receive the result electronically. If it is urgent, we will report it as soon as possible after the scan is performed and will phone the result to the requesting doctor if necessary. If you have previous films, it is helpful if you bring them with you as the radiologist may want to compare the new scan with old ones to provide a better and more accurate report.