

CT Scan



A CT scan is a kind of X-ray. A CT scan makes pictures of the inside of your body. In this procedure, the pictures will be taken in a large machine that has an opening (*CT scanner*).

What happens before the procedure?

Staying hydrated

Follow instructions from your doctor about hydration, which may include:

- Up to 2 hours before the procedure – you may continue to drink clear liquids. These include water, clear fruit juice, black coffee, and plain tea.

Eating and drinking restrictions

Follow instructions from your doctor about eating and drinking, which may include:

- 24 hours before the procedure – stop drinking caffeinated drinks. These include energy drinks, tea, soda, coffee, and hot chocolate.
- 8 hours before the procedure – stop eating heavy meals or foods. These include meat, fried foods, or fatty foods.
- 6 hours before the procedure – stop eating light meals or foods. These include toast or cereal.
- 6 hours before the procedure – stop drinking milk or drinks that have milk in them.
- 2 hours before the procedure – stop drinking clear liquids.

General instructions

- Take off any jewelry.
- Ask your doctor about changing or stopping your normal medicines. This is important if you take diabetes medicines or blood thinners.

What happens during the procedure?

- You will lie on a table with your arms above your head.
- An IV tube may be put into one of your veins.
- Dye may be put into the IV tube. You may feel warm or have a metal taste in your mouth.
- The table you will be lying on will move into the CT scanner.
- You will be able to see, hear, and talk to the person who is running the machine while you are in it. Follow that person's directions.

- The machine will move around you to take pictures. **Do not** move.
- When the machine is done taking pictures, it will be turned off.
- The table will be moved out of the machine.
- Your IV tube will be taken out.

The procedure may vary among doctors and hospitals.

What happens after the procedure?

- It is up to you to get your results. Ask when your results will be ready.

Summary

- A CT scan is a kind of X-ray.
- A CT scan makes pictures of the inside of your body.
- Follow instructions from your doctor about eating and drinking before the procedure.
- You will be able to see, hear, and talk to the person who is running the machine while you are in it. Follow that person's directions.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.