

CT Scan

CT or "CAT" scans are special x-ray tests that produce cross-sectional images of the body using x-rays and a computer. These images allow the radiologist to look at the inside of the body just as one would look at the inside of a loaf of bread by slicing it. CT scans are frequently used to evaluate the brain, neck, spine, chest, abdomen, pelvis and sinuses.

Head or brain CT evaluates the various structures of the brain, and to look for a mass, stroke, bleed or blood vessel abnormality. It is also sometimes used to evaluate the skull.

Neck CT evaluates the soft tissues of the neck and is frequently used to study a lump or mass in the neck or to look for enlarged lymph nodes or glands.

CT of the chest is frequently used to further evaluate an abnormality on a plain chest xray. It is also often used to look for enlarged lymph nodes.

Abdominal and pelvic CT evaluate the abdominal and pelvic organs and the gastrointestinal tract. These studies are often ordered to evaluate for a cause of pain and sometimes to follow-up on an abnormality seen on another test such as an ultrasound.

Sinus CT exam is used to both diagnose sinus disease and to look for a narrowing or obstruction in the sinus drainage pathway.

Spine CT test is most commonly used to look for a herniated disc or narrowing of the spinal canal (spinal stenosis) in patients with neck, arm back and/or leg pain.

The CT scanner looks like a large donut with a narrow table. The patient lies on the table which moves through the center of the machine. The technologist is in the next room and can observe the patient through a large window. Some scans (abdomen and pelvis) require the patient to drink a dilute barium liquid prior to the scan. Also, for certain exams contrast or dye must be injected into a vein during the scan. The entire procedure takes 15 to 45 minutes depending on what part of the body is being scanned. After the scan is finished, a board certified radiologist will interpret the study and send a report to the referring physician.



PREPARATION:

Abdomen/ Pelvis

1. Pick up one CT barium drink the day before your exam
2. Do not eat or drink 4 hours before your exam.
3. 120 minutes (2 hours) before your exam drink the whole bottle of barium.

Instructions for barium drink:

This kit contains 1(450ml) bottle of barium. This is pre-mixed and ready to use.

It may taste better when refrigerated.

~Please SHAKE WELL before using.

~**DO NOT** mix with any other substance.

~**DO NOT** pour over ice.

~**DO NOT** have any liquid or solid food for FOUR HOURS prior to your scheduled appointment time. SIXTY(60) MINUTES before your scheduled appointment time, drink the whole bottle of barium.

NOTE: During this preparation time, be sure to take all medications as prescribed by your physician.

Head/Neck/Chest/Extremities

DO NOT eat or drink 4 hours before our exam.