



CT/CAT Scan



What is a CAT/CT Scan?

CT or "CAT" scans are special x-ray tests that show 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. A CAT Scan is sometimes compared to looking into a loaf of bread by cutting the loaf into thin slices. When the image slices are reassembled by a computer, the result is a very detailed view of the body's interior.

To Prepare:

1. Go to hospital registration first. Bring your picture ID and your insurance information and card.
2. Before the exam is done, you will be asked questions about your medical history and medications you are taking. Be sure and bring a list of all your medications with you. Tell us if you have any allergies to x-ray/iodine dye or numbing medicines.
3. Wear comfortable clothes, without metal, or you may be asked to put on a patient gown.

Appointment Date: _____ **Arrival Time:** _____ **AM/PM Scan Time:** _____ **AM/PM**

Your Exam: _____

Please mark all that apply: **Oral Contrast** **IV Contrast** **No Contrast**

Types of CAT/CT Scans:

There are two different types of CT contrast that can be used, which is determined by your physician. Oral contrast which you will have to drink and IV contrast which will require a temporary IV to be started as the dye will need to be injected into a vein. Contrast is used to highlight specific areas inside the body, which creates a clearer image. A CAT/CT Scan can also be done without contrast. Note: Women of child bearing age may be required to have a pregnancy test prior to the exam.

- **Oral Contrast:** Do not eat or drink anything 3 hours before you must start drinking the oral contrast. You will have to sip slowly on the CT drink for 1-2 hours depending on how your exam is ordered. The CT drink helps highlight your intestinal tract. You MAY use the restroom as often as needed. Some patients may prefer to pick up the CT drink before the scheduled appointment date and drink at home. Please contact us if you prefer this option. We will give you instructions on how to pick up the CT drink.
- **IV Contrast:** Do not eat or drink anything 3 hours before your scheduled appointment time. You may need to have blood drawn for labs, depending on the test ordered. We will need to start a temporary IV in order to inject the IV contrast into a vein. This helps highlight certain vessels and organs in the body.
- **No Contrast:** Come to the hospital at least 15 minutes prior to your exam time. If NO contrast is ordered, you won't be required to drink the oral contrast or get an IV contrast injection.

What will I feel during and after the procedure?

- CT exams are generally painless, fast and easy.
- You will have to lie very still, sometimes with your arms above your head. If you have a hard time staying still, are claustrophobic or have chronic pain, ask your doctor to prescribe something for you.
- If IV contrast is used, you may have a warm, flushed sensation during the injection of the contrast and a metallic taste in your mouth that lasts for a few minutes. Some patients may have a sensation like they have to urinate, but this subsides quickly.
- If you are required to drink the oral contrast, you can expect to experience a sense of abdominal fullness. Some patients may also experience diarrhea. You will be allowed to use the restroom as needed.
- You will be alone in the exam room during the scan. However, the technologist will be able to see, hear and speak with you at all times.
- After a CT exam, you can return to your normal activities. If you received contrast material, you may be given special instructions.
- Contact your doctor for the results of the exam. If you have any questions please call us 815-625-0400, Ext. # 4508