

CT Exam

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A CT (computed tomography) exam uses X-ray and a computer to get an in-depth look at your internal organs, tissues, blood vessels and bones. The result is an image that provides a clear and detailed picture of your body.

What To Tell Your Health Care Provider and Technologist

Tell your health care provider and technologist if you:

- have had a contrast reaction
 - To try to reduce the risk of a contrast reaction, you will be given a medicine to take the day before your exam.
 - There is still a chance you may have a reaction. If you have questions or concerns, talk with your health care provider.
- have any allergies to latex or medicine
- are breastfeeding, pregnant or think you may be pregnant
- have kidney disease
- **have diabetes** (Ask for an early morning appointment and talk with your health care provider about your medicine needs.)
- take any medicines. Check with your health care provider to see if you have special medicine instructions.

Your Appointment

Date: _____

Time: _____ a.m. / p.m.

Contrast

Depending on the type of CT exam you will be having, you may need to have an intravenous (IV) contrast injection. The contrast will help certain areas in your body be seen better on the image.

You may need a blood test to check your creatinine level (kidney function) before you have the injection.

There is a small chance you could develop a contrast reaction. **Reactions normally occur right after the injection.** They are usually mild.

Your health care team will watch you carefully during the injection and exam.

If you have any symptoms of a contrast reaction, you will stay at the hospital or clinic until you feel better. Team members are prepared to quickly treat any symptoms during your exam.

Please note: If you have a contrast reaction and are given Benadryl® (diphenhydramine), your technologist will recommend that you **do not** drive for 6 hours. Benadryl can make you drowsy.

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Diabetes and Metformin

If you have **diabetes**, an injection of contrast may change how your kidneys work. This could lead to a rare but serious side effect (lactic acidosis) from the medicine you take to manage your diabetes.

To help prevent this possible side effect, it is recommended that people who take any medicine containing metformin should stop taking this medicine for **48 hours after** a procedure when an IV contrast was used.

Before your CT exam, ask the health care provider who is managing your diabetes for instructions. If he or she tells you to stop taking any medicine that contains metformin *before* the exam, be sure to get instructions for what to do *after* the exam.

Examples of medicines that contain metformin include Glucophage®, Glucovance™, Avandamet®, Metaglip™, Glucophage XR®, Fortamet®, Glumetza™, Janumet™, Actoplus Met™, Riomet®, metformin ER and metformin.

Before the Exam

- Follow any instructions you received from your health care provider.
- Take any medicines you need with a small sip of water, or as directed by your health care provider.
- Bring a list of your current medicines with you to the exam. Include all prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbal or natural products.
- The radiology staff will answer your questions.

During the Exam

- You will be helped on the scan table. It will move in and out of a doughnut-shaped piece of equipment.
- You will need to lie still during the exam.
- You may be asked to hold your breath.
- If you need a contrast injection:
 - An IV will be placed in your arm before the exam starts.
 - When the contrast is injected, you may feel a warmth or flushing or notice a metallic taste. This is normal.

After the Exam

- Return to your normal activities, diet and medicines. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- If you received a contrast injection:
 - The IV catheter will be removed.
 - If your health care provider says you are able, drink up to four 8-ounce glasses of water for the next 8 hours to clear the contrast out of your system.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you:

- have discomfort, redness or warmth at the IV site
- develop signs of a possible contrast reaction: hives or itching or swelling.

Results

- A radiologist or cardiologist will look at and interpret your scan.
- Your health care provider will receive the exam results. He or she will either talk with you about the results or mail you the results.