

Heart Scan (CT Cardiac Calcium Score)

Heart Scan

A heart scan (also known as a CT cardiac calcium score) is a screening test to detect coronary artery disease. It shows the amount of harmful calcium deposits you have in your heart.

The CT scanner uses X-ray to take pictures of your chest.

The amount of calcium is used to calculate a score that is compared to other people of your age and gender. This score, along with other information, helps determine your risk of coronary artery disease.

Heart Disease Risk Factors

Coronary artery disease is the No. 1 killer in the U.S., affecting about 5 million people each year. Risk factors are conditions or behaviors that lead to plaque buildup.

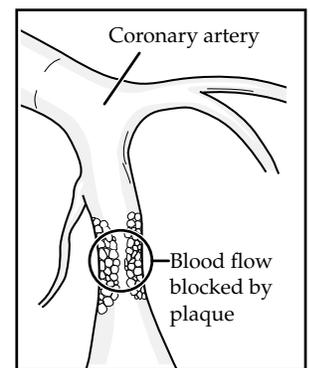
Risk factors for heart disease include:

- age
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol
- diabetes
- smoking
- family history
- obesity
- physical inactivity.

Coronary Artery Disease

Coronary artery disease can cause chest discomfort or pain (angina), heart attack (myocardial infarction) and heart failure.

Over time, plaque can form and harden in the arteries of your heart. It narrows your heart's arteries in a process called atherosclerosis, which can restrict blood flow to your heart.



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There are two types of plaque:

- **Non-obstructive:** Plaque that cracks can cause a clot to form within a coronary artery. The clot can stop blood flow to your heart, leading to heart attack or heart damage. This form of plaque is the most likely to cause a heart attack.
- **Obstructive:** Plaque that continues to build up slowly over time, reducing blood flow to your heart. When this happens, you may feel symptoms such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath or unusual fatigue (tiredness) when you are physically active. Obstructive plaque does not always cause symptoms.

The more plaque in your arteries, the greater your risk for a heart attack or heart symptoms.

(over)

Before and During the Scan

- Try to avoid smoking and caffeine the day of your scan.
- You may be asked to remove jewelry from around your neck and change into a hospital gown.
- You'll lie on a table and the technician will put a few small electrode patches on your chest.
- The table will slide into the CT scanner.
- You will be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds so that the technician can get clear images of your heart.

Results

A cardiologist will read and analyze the images of your heart. A radiologist will look at anatomy outside of your heart such as your lungs.

Your results will include your coronary artery calcium score, which shows the overall calcium build-up in your arteries.

Your health care provider can determine your risk for heart disease by using the results of your calcium score and reviewing your heart disease risk factors.

Cost

The cost for a heart scan is \$100, paid at the time of your appointment. You will receive a receipt at the time of your payment. Please call your insurance provider to find out if the cost of this test is reimbursable.

Anyone older than age 40 and younger than age 85 with one or more heart disease risk factor is encouraged to have a heart scan, or as directed by your health care provider.

Locations

To schedule a heart scan, please call:

- Buffalo Hospital
 - 763-684-3801
 - 303 Catlin St.,
Buffalo, MN 55313
- Cambridge Medical Center
 - 763-688-7947
 - 701 South Dellwood St.,
Cambridge, MN 55008
- Mercy Hospital
 - 763-236-7700
 - 4050 Coon Rapids Blvd.,
Coon Rapids, MN 55433
- Mercy Hospital — Unity Campus
 - 763-236-7700
 - Emergency Department Entrance/
Patient Registration
 - 550 Osborne Road N.E.,
Fridley, MN 55432
- United Heart & Vascular Clinic
 - 651-241-2750
 - 225 N. Smith Ave.,
St. Paul, MN 55102.