

Computed Tomography Coronary Angiography

Information for patients



Leeds
Radiology

This leaflet will help to explain what a Computed Tomography Coronary Angiography scan is, how to prepare for it, and what to expect.

What is a CT scan, and what is CTCA?

A Computed Tomography (CT) scan uses x-rays to create detailed images of the inside of the body, including internal organs and blood vessels. You have been referred for a Computed Tomography Coronary Angiography (CTCA) scan, a CT scan looking specifically at the heart and its blood vessels (coronary arteries). The results of the scan will help your doctor/cardiologist with a diagnosis and decide on any further treatment for you.

You will normally be in the scan room no longer than 20 minutes, and the examination will be fully explained to you.

Who will perform the test?

A Senior Cardiac Radiographer will perform your CT scan, and may be accompanied by a Cardiac Radiologist or Cardiologist.

How do I prepare for the test?

The most important preparation to ensure you have a slow and steady heart rate on the day of your scan is to avoid all stimulants such as coffee, tea, fizzy drinks, chocolate etc.

We also ask that you don't eat solid foods for two hours before your scan.

If you have been prescribed medication to control your heart rate (such as a beta-blocker), it's very important to continue to take these as prescribed.

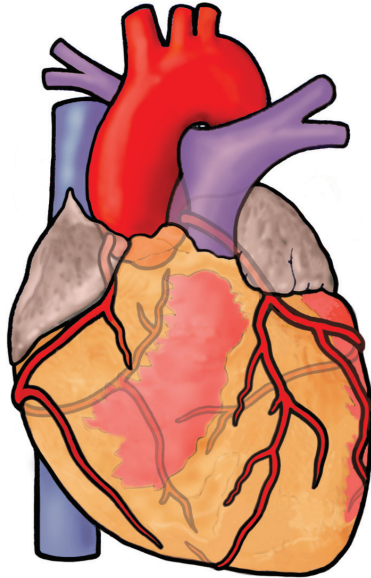
How is the scan carried out?

We will first undertake a checklist to ensure we are safe to proceed with your scan.

A member of staff will insert a small tube (cannula) into a vein in your arm so that we can administer an x-ray dye during your scan

Your blood pressure, heart rate, height and weight will also be recorded.

When it is time for your scan, you will be taken through by a member of staff and will be asked to lie on a bed that will move you through the scanner. You will need to remove anything metal from your top half, so we recommend wearing as little metal as possible (jewellery, underwired bra, braces etc.). We will place sticky pads on your chest to monitor your heart rate throughout the scan.



It may be necessary to give you medication to slow your heart rate for the scan, this may be in addition to any similar medication you may have been prescribed prior to your CT scan.

We may also give a spray under your tongue (GTN spray) which helps improve the scan pictures of the blood vessels surrounding your heart.

This can cause a slight headache, but this is normal and will be fully explained to you on the day of your scan.

The scan will involve a number of breath holds, as well as an injection of x-ray dye.

Following the scan your blood pressure may be checked again, and the cannula removed. You will be asked to wait in the department for up to 30 minutes following your appointment.

After your scan

How will I get my results?

You will not be given any results on the day of your scan.

You will be sent an appointment to attend the relevant Cardiology clinic or contacted by letter with the results.

Anything else?

You may need to return for additional scanning dependent on your heart rate. Don't be alarmed if you are called back for an additional CT scan.

Can I eat and drink normally after my scan?

Yes, eat and drink normally following your scan. We recommend drinking plenty of fluid for the days following your scan.

Are there side effects or risks from the procedure?

CT scanning involves x-rays. Female patients who are, or might be, pregnant must inform a member of staff in advance.

The amount of radiation used is more than an ordinary x-ray of the chest or body and is equal to the natural radiation we receive from the atmosphere over a period of approximately three years. The risk from this radiation dose is low, and the benefits of having your scan outweigh these risks.

You will have an x-ray dye injected through a cannula in a vein as part of your scan. This injection usually causes nothing more than a warm feeling passing around your body. There is a small risk of allergic reaction to this dye, so you will be asked to complete a contrast safety questionnaire on the day of your scan.

We may need to give you a medication called Metoprolol (beta-blocker) to slow your heart rate. This can make you dizzy or light headed, but the side effects are quite mild and we make sure that you are feeling well before leaving the department.

We may also give you a spray under your tongue called Glyceryl Trinitrate (GTN) to ensure we get the best images possible. This can cause a mild headache which is normal, and will be explained to you by the doctor supervising your scan.

The Radiologist or Cardiologist will explain this to you fully if they feel it necessary to get the best images

Frequently asked questions

What if I have a known allergy to x-ray contrast media / iodine?

Please contact the CT department as soon as possible to ask for advice.

Will the scan be painful?

No, but you may experience some mild discomfort when the cannula is inserted.

Should I stop taking my medication before the scan?

No, continue to take any medication you are on as normal, unless you've been advised otherwise. If you have been prescribed heart rate medication such as beta-blockers it is important you take these before your scan as prescribed.

Can I drive home following my scan?

It is recommended that you do not drive or use heavy machinery for one hour following your scan.

Contact us

If you have any other questions that we have not answered, please telephone: **0113 733 4974**

This leaflet is also available in electronic form on the hospital website: www.leedsth.nhs.uk and search for patient information leaflets - Computed Tomography Coronary Angiography.

Notes

A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



What did you think of your care?

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Your views matter



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