

## FAQs ABOUT CT SCANS

### What is a CT scan?

A computed tomography (CT) scan uses x-ray technology to take multiple cross-sectional images of the inside of your body. Compared to regular x-rays, a CT scan can take clearer images of organs, bone, soft tissue, blood vessels, and other areas of your body.

### What happens during the scan?

You will lie flat on your back on the CT table. The tech will operate the machine in the next room, where they can see and hear you the whole time. For some exams you may be asked to hold your breath. For all exams you must hold very still. If you are receiving contrast (a dye that is used to make parts of your body show up better) through an IV, the tech will let you know when it will be given to you.

### What is contrast?

**Oral contrast** is a liquid that contains the element barium. It is used to make parts of your digestive system show up better. You will drink the contrast 1 hour before your exam.

**Intravenous (IV) contrast** is an iodine solution that is injected into a vein in your arm. It is used to make your blood vessels, organs, and tissue show up better. With IV contrast, you may feel a hot, flushed feeling or a metallic taste in your mouth. This is normal and will pass in a few minutes.

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### Can I use the bathroom after I drink oral contrast?

Yes. You may use the bathroom as often as needed when you are waiting to be scanned.

### Can I eat or drink anything while I wait?

No. After you drink the oral contrast, or are receiving IV contrast, you are not allowed to eat or drink anything 2 hours before your scan.

### How long will my scan take?

Your scan will take anywhere from 10 to 15 minutes.

### Do all CT scans need IV contrast?

No. Depending on which body part and the reason why you're having the exam, you may or may not need IV contrast.

### Can I bend my arm if I have an IV?

Yes. An IV is nothing more than a plastic catheter (tube). Bending or moving your arm will not disturb the IV.

### When do I get the results?

The results of your test will be sent to your requesting doctor within 24 to 48 hours.

Your Care. Our Commitment.