

CT Scan Prep Guidelines & FAQs

- You must have your physician order with you when you come for your CT examination.
- Women who are pregnant, or suspect they may be pregnant, should not have a CT scan without consulting their physician.
- If you are over age 60 and your CT exam is ordered WITH contrast you must have a BUN/Creatinine lab test within the 6 weeks prior to the exam.

Questions about your medical history, including current medications and allergy information will be asked on the day of the exam. **Please have a list of medications with you on the day of your exam.**

Q: How do I prepare for my CT examination?

A: Wear loose, comfortable clothing. We encourage you to go to the bathroom before the test. Do not eat or drink anything 4 hours prior to the exam. You may take your medication with a small amount of water.

Q: I was told I have to drink barium (oral contrast) before my exam. Where do I get this?

A: If you are scheduled for a CT scan of the abdomen and/or pelvis, you will need to come to the Imaging Services Department at least one day before your CT exam date to pick up oral contrast (barium). This oral contrast is used to help us see the GI tract more clearly. You will be given directions for drinking it when you pick it up.

Q: My order says “with contrast” what does this mean?

A: CT exams with (IV) contrast For CT exams with IV contrast, you will not be able to eat or drink for 4 hours prior to your exam. You will be given an intravenous (IV) injection of contrast media. It may make you feel warm or give you a strange taste in your mouth, but this will pass very quickly.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR DIABETIC PATIENTS OR PATIENTS OVER AGE 60: BUN/Creatinine lab tests must be performed on all patients over age 60 within 6 weeks prior to the exam. This is due to the injection of the IV contrast. If you have not had your BUN/Creatinine lab test, it is best if you come to the hospital the day before the CT exam with a lab order for this test. If it must be done on the same day as the CT, you will need to arrive 1 hour before your CT appointment time to register and then report to the Outpatient Laboratory for the BUN/Creatinine lab test. Not all CT exams require the use of IV contrast. For these exams, you may eat/drink as you wish. If you are unsure if your exam is with or without IV contrast, please contact your physician or the Imaging Services Department.

Q: What can I expect during the CT exam?

A: A registered CT technologist / radiologic technologist will explain and perform your exam. During the exam you will lie on a table that slides into a doughnut-shaped hole. The actual scan will be brief and painless. You may be asked to hold your breath periodically as you go through the scanner. Each CT exam is different, but most take no more than 30 minutes.

Q: What kind of effects with the CT examination have on me?

A: There are no ill effects and you may resume normal activity immediately after your CT exam.

Q: How will I get my results?

A: Your results will be forwarded to your ordering physician within 24 hours of your exam (NOTE: Physician office times and volumes vary. Please check with your referring physician regarding when you can expect your results from his or her office). You may also access all results through [My Adventist Health](#). To find out more about how to sign up for My Adventist Health, [click here](#).