

What is a CT (Computerized Tomography) Scan?

"Very good. You can breathe normally."

A computed tomography, or CT scan, is a test that uses X-rays to take detailed pictures of your organs, bones, blood vessels, or tissues.

"Often it's used for diagnosing a disease or to evaluate an injury. Other times it can be used for surgical or procedural planning. Other times, if you've been receiving treatment for a diagnosis, it allows your doctor to see how you're responding to that treatment and if the treatment is working."-Dr. Aaron Hattaway, MD Radiologist

In some cases, you may need to swallow a liquid known as a contrast dye or get it through an IV in your arm or hand. Which method is used depends on the area being examined. The dye makes your organs and tissues show up more clearly on the images. If you're getting contrast dye, you may be asked not to eat or drink anything for a few hours before the test.

"We ask you to wear something comfortable for the exam. Any metal on the clothing, we will ask to remove along with jewelry, hearing aids, denture work - anything that's going to obstruct the view of the area that we're interested in looking at."-Gregory Caputo, CT/MRI Technologist

For the test, you'll lie on your back on a table, which will slowly move through the round opening of the CT machine.

"Ok, hold real still."

You may be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds as the machine takes X-ray images of the area being examined.

"You did great. You can bring your arms down."

The whole scan should take less than 30 minutes. After it's finished, you can go home.

"If your results are normal, you may not need to do anything else, but if the test picks up a problem, you may need additional tests. You should be sure and ask your provider so that they can give you guidance as to additional tests, treatments or any other follow up that you may need."- Dr. Aaron Hattaway, MD Radiologist