

What are the preparation instructions?

Each type of imaging exam has its' own guidelines. Special instructions for your exam will be given at the time of scheduling. For certain procedures, we will contact you with specific instructions 24-48 hours prior to your exam. The following are a few general guidelines that apply to every imaging exam.

- Notify your physician and our staff if there is any chance that you may be pregnant or are currently breastfeeding.
- Discuss any special needs, such as dietary and/or physical limitations, with us prior to your exam.
- Before your exam, check with us about recovery time or if a driver is needed. This way you can make any necessary arrangements with work and/or family.
- Wear comfortable, metal-free clothing. Be prepared to change into a patient gown if necessary.
- Arrive 20 minutes before your appointment to verify your registration information and provide further health information for your exam.
- If instructed to do so, bring prior x-rays or scans with you to your appointment.

What is informed consent?

Informed consent is the term used to describe the process of providing you with information about the examination you will be having. Informed consent is necessary before any contrast agent injections to ensure you are aware of the risks associated with the injection. While it is not necessary for your to sign the informed consent form, we may decide not to proceed with the examination if the form is not signed.

What is Computed Tomography (CT)?

Computed Tomography (CT) is a rapid, painless diagnostic examination that combines x-ray and computers. A CT scan allows the radiologist to see the location, nature, and extent of many different diseases or abnormalities inside your body.

How does a CT scan work?

Multiple low-dose x-rays are taken in sequence by a rotating x-ray tube. All you need to do is lie still on a table for approximately 10-30 minutes. The table will move you through the donut shaped machine, which houses the x-ray tube and set of detectors. Images are acquired by the detectors that pick-up the x-rays passing through your body. The computer processes this information to form a sequential image that the radiologist will review and interpret.

What is Contrast?

Contrast is a substance that has a different opacity from soft tissue. Some CT scans require a contrast agent to enhance the pictures taken of your body. If necessary, you will receive special instructions from us regarding the contrast agent, which is either orally administered before the exam or intravenously administered during the exam.

What are the instructions for oral contrast?

For CT exams requiring an oral contrast agent, you will need to follow these instructions.

1. Pick up two containers of liquid from our office. The containers may be refrigerated until used. Shake the containers well before drinking.
2. **Drink the first container at 9:00 PM** the night before your CT exam appointment.
3. Your last meal before your exam must be **4 hours** before the exam and consist of **clear liquids only**.
4. The day of your exam, **drink ½ of the second container 2 hours** before your scheduled appointment.
5. **Drink the other ½ of the contain 1 hour** before your scheduled appointment.

You must arrive at our office **30 MINUTES** before your scheduled exam to consume one more drink.

Note: You may experience diarrhea for a day or two following the exam. You may receive an injection of contrast during your exam.

Note: If you are diabetic, please review the instructions for diabetic patients.

What are the instructions for intravenous contrast?

For CT exams requiring an intravenous contrast agent, you will need to follow these instructions. Additionally, we encourage you to drink clear liquids prior to your exam.

Morning Appointments:

1. You may have a normal diet until **midnight the day before your exam**.
2. On the day of your scheduled appointment, you should have **clear liquids only**.

Afternoon and Evening Appointments:

1. You may have a **normal diet until 4 hours before your exam**.
2. You should then have **only clear liquids** before the exam.

Note: If you are diabetic, please review the instructions for diabetic patients.

What are the instructions for diabetic patients?

For patients on Glucophage®/Glucovance®, Metaglip™, or Avandimet™ therapy and undergoing procedures involving intravenous administration of contrast, the information provided by the manufacturers of these drugs states that they “should be stopped at the time of, or prior to, the procedure.” Then, they should be withheld for 48 hours after the procedure. Medication therapy can be started again once renal function is found to be normal. Your referring physician will be informed of these conditions prior to your study. You should then refer to your physician’s instructions for restarting this medication therapy.

How safe is contrast?

General Indications: Iodinated contrast agents are safe and in wide use. Some adverse effects do occur and questions do remain about their use, safety, and interactions.

Patients with prior reactions or allergies: Contrast agents can be safely used in patients with prior reaction or an allergy, assuming the previous reaction is known and special care is taken to treat any reaction.

If pregnant or think you may be pregnant: There is no evidence of harm to a fetus or infant when contrast agents are used. However, it is prudent to weigh the theoretical risks and benefits and avoid contrast administration unless it is truly necessary.