

Having a CT scan of the blood supply to your heart (CT coronary angiogram)

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

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Introduction

If you are an outpatient please read your appointment letter carefully. It tells you which hospital your appointment is at.

This leaflet tells you about your scan. Please read it carefully. It has important information and instructions.

Important information

- **If you have had any recent procedures on your heart please contact the radiology department booking office. This is so we can check if you still need to have this scan.**
- **If there is any chance that you may be pregnant please also call the radiology department booking office.**

The number to call is on your appointment letter or the back of this leaflet.

What is a CT coronary angiogram?

A CT (computed tomography) scan is an X-ray test that gives much more information than a normal X-ray. It produces detailed images of your organs and blood vessels. When you have a CT scan, you lie down on the scanner table. The table moves in and out of the scanner during your scan.

A CT coronary angiogram produces detailed images of the heart. It shows if the blood vessels that take blood to your heart (coronary arteries) are narrow or blocked. This medical problem is called coronary artery disease.

Part of the scan looks at how much calcium is in your artery walls. This is called a calcium score test.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How do I get ready for my CT scan?

- Read your appointment letter. It will tell you if you need to follow any special instructions. It is very important that you follow the preparation instructions in your appointment letter.
- **If you are on medicine** from your doctor please take it as usual, unless they have told you not to.
- If you are taking Viagra (sildenafil) or similar drugs (phosphodiesterase inhibitors) on a regular basis please contact your cardiologist, GP or other doctor. This is to check if it is safe for you to stop taking this in the 24 hours before your scan.
- Please bring with you any sprays, inhalers or angina tablets that you are taking.
- **If you have diabetes and your appointment letter has eating and drinking instructions**, please talk to your normal diabetes care provider if you need advice. Please tell the CT staff on arrival if you have diabetes.
- **Please do not have any food or drink with caffeine in** (coffee, tea, chocolate, fizzy drinks) on the day of your scan. This is important because caffeine can raise your heart rate.
- **If you have had any recent procedures on your heart, please tell the CT staff when you arrive.** This is so we can check if you still need to have this scan. We may not know if you have had another test or treatment on your heart in the time since you were referred for this scan.

Important safety information about contrast liquid

We will give you an injection of a colourless liquid (contrast liquid) into a vein in your arm. It shows up on X-rays and CT scans. Contrast liquid has iodine in it. Your kidneys remove it from your body in your pee (urine). If you are on dialysis it will be removed then.

Please tell the CT staff when you arrive if:

- **You are allergic to iodine or rubber (latex)**, have any other allergies or have asthma.
- **You have had a reaction in the past to a contrast liquid injected into a vein (intravenous contrast).** This is the dye used for kidney X-rays, CT scanning and X-rays of your heart and blood vessels.
- **You are on kidney dialysis or have any problems with your kidneys.**
- **You have diabetes.**
- **There is any chance that you may be pregnant.**

Who will be doing my scan?

A radiographer will do the scan. Radiographers have had special training to do CT scans.

A doctor who specialises in CT scans (a radiologist) and a radiology assistant may be there to help.

As we are a teaching hospital a student may also be in the room. If you do not want this, you can ask that a student is not in the room when you have your scan.

What happens during the CT scan?

- When you get to the Radiology Department we will direct you to the CT waiting area.
- We will take you to a changing cubicle. We will ask you to take off some of your clothes and put on a hospital gown.
- We will put a thin tube (cannula) into a vein in your arm.
- We will take you into the scan room. We will talk to you about the scan. You can ask any questions you may have.
- We will give you 2 tablets of a medicine. It is called glyceryl trinitrate (GTN). You put the tablets under your tongue. You must let the tablets dissolve slowly. GTN medicine makes your blood vessels widen (dilate). We will be able to see them more clearly.
- We will put sticky patches (electrodes) on your chest. This is so that the scan can be timed to your heart rate.
- We will ask you to lie down on the scan table. You must keep still so we get clear pictures. We will ask you to hold your breath a few times during your scan. It is important for you to follow these instructions carefully so that we can get clear pictures of your heart.
- You will move in and out of the CT scanner for a quick scan. This is the calcium score part of the scan.
- We may give you an injection of a medicine (a betablocker) to slow down your heart rate. We do this if we need to get clearer pictures. We will tell you if it is needed. A specialist X-ray doctor (radiologist) or specialist radiographer will decide if you need to have this injection.
- We then do the CT scan of your arteries. We give you an injection of contrast liquid that shows up on CT scans. This will make your blood vessels show up on the scan pictures. You may get a warm feeling and a metallic taste when we give you the injection. You may feel sick. If you do get these feelings they usually last about 1 minute. Some patients will also have the feeling that they are about to pee (pass urine) but they are not actually doing so. This is also normal.
- The CT scan takes between 10 and 30 minutes.

What happens after the scan?

If you were given an injection of contrast liquid, you will need to stay with us for a short time after your scan before you can go home. You may be in the Radiology Department for up to 90 minutes in total, but it could be longer for some patients. The time will vary for each patient.

If you have been given a betablocker injection, we will check your blood pressure 30 minutes after your scan. If your blood pressure is low, we will check it again until it goes back to your normal level.

You should then be free to return to work / normal daily life. You can eat and drink as usual after the scan.

How do I get the results?

You will not get your results today.

We will send the results to the hospital doctor or specialist nurse who wanted you to have this test. They should contact you when they have your results.



Are there any risks?

Reaction to contrast liquid: Some patients may be allergic to the contrast liquid. You could get symptoms such as feeling or being sick (nausea or vomiting), or a rash. If you get any of these symptoms at the hospital, tell the doctor, nurse or other staff looking after you. If you start to get symptoms at home you should contact your GP or call 111.

Side effects or reaction to GTN tablets: the most common side effects are: headache that lasts for about 20 minutes, feeling dizzy, low blood pressure, fast heart rate. These usually only last a short time. There is also a risk of allergic reaction.

Side effects or reaction to betablockers: the most common side effects are: low blood pressure, feeling dizzy, headache, slow heart rate. These usually only last a short time. There is also a risk of allergic reaction.

Possible risks from exposure to radiation in this scan: The main risk from exposure to X-rays is a higher risk of getting a cancer in the future. This risk is thought to be very small.

We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from the sun, the food we eat, and the ground. Each test that uses X-rays gives a dose on top of this natural background radiation. The radiation from the X-rays during a CT scan is equivalent to receiving up to 5 years of natural background radiation. The benefits of having this test are likely to outweigh any possible risks. The risks of not having the test could be greater. We try to keep your exposure to X-rays as low as possible.

The risks of radiation are slightly higher for an unborn child. We must ask all patients age 10 to 15 years registered female and all patients aged 16 to 55 years about their periods and/or chance of being pregnant.

What if I need to talk to someone?

If you have any questions or concerns, or cannot make the appointment:

Please call the Radiology department booking office on **0116 258 8765** and select **option 3**.
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, but not on bank holidays.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk