

Coronary CT Angiography

Patient Information and Consent



CT scanning of your coronary arteries is a relatively new way of looking at the coronary arteries. The traditional test is a coronary angiogram.

It is vitally important that you contact us prior to your appointment on 01733 678384 (choose option 3) if you have undergone any recent imaging of your heart at any Hospital. Failure to do so may result in your examination being cancelled on the day.

Why a CT Scan of the Coronaries?

The main advantage of a CT scan is that you can go home shortly after the procedure. It is very quick and has very few potential complications.

Unlike a coronary angiogram, which requires admission to hospital for a needle to be inserted into an artery (high pressure blood vessel) in your groin, a CT scan simply involves a needle in a vein in your elbow (similar to a blood test). The needle is removed leaving a flexible plastic tube (IV line) through which contrast (x-ray dye) is injected to show the coronary arteries. This tube is removed before you head home.

What to Expect:

Please note that the Diagnostic Imaging department is on the ground floor but a considerable walk from the main Hospital entrance. However, wheelchairs are available near the entrance for your use.

The procedure is very quick; the actual time in the scanner room is about 20-30 minutes. We may however give you medication to slow and steady your heart rate which can take a variable amount of time to work so please allow plenty of time for your appointment (up to 3 hours).

The scan itself is over in approximately 10-20seconds. You will need to hold your breath for this, so please let us know if you have difficulties breathing or lying flat for any length of time.

A puff of GTN (Nitrolingual spray) is given under the tongue just before the scan to relax your coronary arteries, helping us to obtain the best images possible. If you are taking Cialis, Viagra or Levitra it is important that you stop taking these for the 24hrs prior to the scan.

You will have ECG (electrocardiogram) leads attached to your chest that give important information to the scanner to help form the images of your heart.

During the scan you will feel a warm sensation throughout your body. This is the contrast (dye) flowing through your veins. This may be accompanied by a slightly metallic smell or taste which is quite normal. The contrast washes out through your kidneys.

The scanner is shaped like a doughnut. The scanner is much more open than an MRI scanner, and a lot less noisy! If you tend to get claustrophobic (fear of enclosed spaces), let us know before you attend. It often helps people to come in and see the scanner beforehand.

What are the Risks?

As with any medical procedure, there are some small risks associated with the scan:

Contrast: Very rarely do people experience an allergic reaction to contrast (dye).

If you are taking any inhalers for asthma, you should bring these with you. Please let us know if you have any kidney problems or are diabetic.

Radiation: x-rays are used during the scan. The amount of radiation used during the scan varies but is around 2-3 times the amount that you naturally receive in a year from background natural sources such as cosmic rays and from rocks in the Earth's crust. To put this in perspective, the lifetime risk of developing cancer due to the x-rays involved in the scan is around 1:4000 compared with a background risk of developing cancer of 1:300 per year. Your doctor will have considered this before advising you to have this scan.

Bruising at the injection site: Very rarely the contrast (dye) goes into the tissues under the skin in your arm rather than the vein. This can cause bruising and swelling which may require ice packs.

Summary of what you need to do before the examination:

If you are taking Cialis, Viagra or Levitra, do not take this medication in the 24 hours prior to your scan.

Eat and Drink normally but have **fluids only** during the **2 hours** before your appointment time.

DO NOT drink any caffeinated drinks for 24hrs prior to your scan.

Please wear loose clothing with no metal on it.

Take your other medications as you normally would.

If you are asthmatic, bring your inhalers with you.

Let us know if you have had a previous reaction to contrast (x-ray dye).

Remember you can:

Expect to spend up to 3 hours at your appointment

Expect a needle (I.V. line) in the vein in your elbow, and a warm sensation during the injection

Expect ECG leads to be stuck to your chest / upper arm.

Expect a spray of GTN under your tongue

Expect a 15sec breath hold and to lie flat for about 15-20 minutes.

After the scan:

The IV line will be removed from your elbow

Drink plenty of fluids to help flush the contrast (dye) through your kidneys

Cialis, Viagra and Levitra can be restarted an hour after the scan.

When do I get the results?

The results will be discussed with you next time you see the requesting doctor.

Please sign below if you are happy to proceed with the scan and bring this form with you:

I understand the above and give consent to undergo CT scanning of the coronary arteries.

Please print name

Signature: Date: