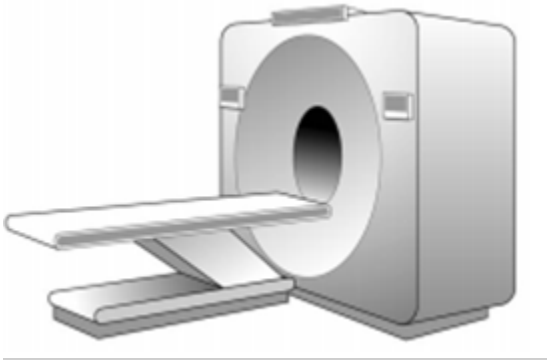
CT (CAT) Scan for Radiation Treatment Planning for the Abdomen

This handout explains what you can expect during your CT scan. When you get to the Radiation Oncology department, please check in at the front desk.

A CT scan is a type of x-ray. While some CT scans are done to diagnose disease, the purpose of this scan is to plan your radiation treatment. Your doctor may or may not be there during the scan. You will meet with a radiation therapist. This may be the same person you see at your radiation treatments.



We will review your health records before your CT scan. If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant, please tell us before the scan. Your doctor may order a pregnancy test if you are of childbearing age.

During Your Scan

The entire visit will take about **30-60 minutes**. The scan itself takes only a few seconds. You will be asked to take off your shirt and then lower your pants. We will keep you covered during the scan. It is important that your bladder is **comfortably full.** Once we are ready, you will lay on a narrow table. You will have to lay straight and flat.

If you are uncomfortable at any point, please let us know. You will be lying in this same position for whole treatment. You must be able to hold your bladder for 15-30 minutes.

We may draw reference points on your skin to note your exact position. Then, we take pictures of your position for your treatment record.

The table will move you in and out of the scanner several times. During the scan, you are alone in the room. We can see and hear you at all times. You must lie still during the scan. If you need something, or have any problems, just speak up. We can hear you.

After Your Scan

The marks that were made on your skin before the scan might need to be made into small permanent tattoos. We will discuss this with you at your visit. If needed, you will get 4 permanent tattoos the size of a small freckle. They are made with a dot of ink and a quick needle poke.

Next Steps

Once your CT scan is done, your scan will be sent to your doctor. These images are used to plan your radiation treatment plan. This will take a couple weeks.

The radiation therapists will schedule your radiation treatments. Unless you and your doctor have made other plans, they will call within 5-10 business days. They will give you instructions on where to go and how to prepare for your treatments.

Placeholder appointments have been scheduled and will appear in MyChart and on any printouts from UW Health. These appointments are not confirmed until you receive a phone call from our department.

Who to Call
Please call the number below, if you have any questions or concerns.

Radiation Oncology Clinic
(608) 915-1200

If you live outside of the Madison area, call **1-800-323-8942**. If the clinic is closed, your call will be transferred to our answering service. Ask to speak to the radiation oncology doctor on call. The doctor will call you back.

Patient Name: _____

Date of Appointment: _____

Time of Appointment: _____

Special Instructions: _____

_____

_____

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 6/2025 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#8045