

## Cardiac CT Scan Angiography (CCTA)

### What is a cardiac CT scan angiography?

A computerized tomography (CT) angiogram is an imaging test that looks at the arteries that supply blood to your heart. This test provides images that show narrowed or blocked arteries in your heart.

### Who may have the test?

Patients who will be good candidates for this CT include:

- Those with symptoms of decreased blood flow to the heart (chest pain).
- A stress test result that did not rule out problems.
- A sudden onset of heart symptoms.
- Those with known or possible heart defects.
- A newly diagnosed weak heart muscle (cardiomyopathy).
- A need for a pacemaker or an atrial ablation procedure.

### Who should not have the test?

Patients who should not have this test include:

- Women who are pregnant.
- Patients with abnormal kidney function.
- Patients who cannot lie flat or hold their breath for up to 15 seconds.

### What should I do to prepare for the test?

- If you have diabetes, speak with the nurse to find out when you should take your diabetes medicine.
- If you take a diuretic (water pill), do not take it the morning of the test.
- Do not eat for 4 hours before the test. You may drink water.
- If you take medicine to slow your heart rate, take them as you normally do.

### How is the test done?

- Arrive at the time you were given. Go to the Heart and Vascular Procedure Center (F4/3).
- You will begin in the prep area where you will be connected to a heart monitor.
- A nurse will place an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your arm. The IV may be used to give medicines to slow your heart and will be connected to the contrast injector during the procedure. The contrast makes your heart's arteries visible on the images.
- You will be taken to the scanner room from the prep area.
- You may be given a nitroglycerine tablet under your tongue to widen (dilate) your coronary arteries.
- You will lie on a long table that moves through a tunnel-like machine.
- If needed, heart images without contrast are taken to check for calcium-containing plaque in the arteries.

### How long will the test take?

You will be at the hospital for about 2 hours. The actual time for the test is 10 to 20 minutes. You can return to your normal daily activities following the CCTA.

### How do I get my test results?

In all cases, the results of the CCTA will be sent to the doctor who ordered the test. Your doctor will discuss the results of the test with you.

**Where can I get more information about this test?**

You may find more information at this website:

[www.uwhealth.org/heartcardiovascular/cardiocomputedtomographyangiographyccta/11773](http://www.uwhealth.org/heartcardiovascular/cardiocomputedtomographyangiographyccta/11773)

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

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 © 1/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6938