

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.

Before Your Scan

- 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 6 hours before the test. You may drink water.
- If you take medicine to slow your heart rate, take them as you normally do.
- **Do not** take Cialis 4 days before your scan.
- **Do not** take Viagra or diet pills 24 hours before your scan.
- **Do not** exercise 2 hours before your scan.
- Avoid caffeine the day of your scan. **Do not** drink any coffee, tea, soda, or energy drinks. The scan works the best when your heart rate is lower.
- Take your beta blocker medicine to lower your heart rate if you take this medicine.
- Let your nurse know if you have asthma or COPD and take any inhalers like albuterol (Ventolin).
- Let your nurse know if you have an allergy to contrast agents (also known as “dye” or “iodine”). You may need to take a steroid before your scan if you have an allergy to dye.
- Let your nurse know if you may be pregnant.

If you have diabetes

Do not take metformin (Glucophage) on the morning of your scan. Do not take it for 48 hours after your scan.

Ask your doctor if you should take your insulin on the morning of the scan.

Day of the Scan

Leave any metal or jewelry at home that goes around your neck or over your chest.

How is the test done?

- Arrive at the time you were given.
- 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..
- You may be given a nitroglycerin 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 will recover for about 30 minutes after the scan before you can go home.

You can return to your normal daily activities following the scan.

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.

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 © 5/2021 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6938