

CT (Computerized Tomography) and CTA (Computerized Tomography Angiogram) of the Brain - Inpatient

What is a Computerized Tomography Angiogram (CT/CTA) of the Brain?

A CT of the brain is a special test using a computer to take pictures of your brain, blood vessels and bones through x-rays.

A CTA is a similar test that uses dye to help the pictures of arteries and blood vessels in your neck that travel to your brain show up better. Doctors can use CT angiogram of your brain to check blood flow through arteries and to find narrowing or blockages in your or neck or brain arteries.

How is a CT/CTA performed?

For the scan you will lie on a table on your back. This table can move in and out of the CT scanner. To get the best pictures of your body, you will need to lie very still during the scanning. You will hear a humming noise while your scan is being done. Most people do not feel fine while confined in the CT scanner but if you have trouble being confined to small spaces, be sure to tell your doctor. .

During the CT scan, we may give you a liquid medicine through an IV. This will go through your body to your neck and into the vessels of the brain. The CT pictures will pick up the dye in your neck and brain arteries. It is important that you do not wear any jewelry around your neck when in the scanner. You will not feel any pain during the scan but some people feel a warm sensation from the liquid medicine.

To get the best pictures of your body, you must lie very still during the scanning periods.

What are the risks?

CT scans expose you to radiation. Your doctor has already thought about the risks to you from radiation but feels the risks are outweighed by the benefit of the information the test will provide.

Tell your doctor or nurse if you have had an allergic or other bad reaction to contrast dye or shellfish. There are ways to decrease the risk of a reaction if your health care team knows about your history.

If you are pregnant or might be pregnant, tell your doctor before the scan. Your doctor will help you decide if you should have the scan or not.

If you have diabetes, tell your doctor right away. **If you have diabetes and are taking any of the pills listed below you will need to not take these for 48 hours after your scan is done.**

- Avandamet[®]
- ActoPlus Met[®]
- Fortamet[®]
- Glucophage[®]
- Glucovance[®]
- Glumetza[®]
- Glyburide
- Janumet[®]
- Metaglip[®]
- Metformin

What happens next?

Many doctors will review the pictures. Once they complete their reading, the results will be sent to the doctor that ordered the scan.

Your doctor will talk with you about the results and what the results mean for your care. It may take as long as 24 hours for your scan to be looked at and to hear what the doctor recommends.

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 © 8/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7414