



What is CT Cardiac Angiogram?

A CT Cardiac Angiogram is a non-invasive CT scan of the heart that helps determine if the location and presence of fatty or calcified plaque deposits have narrowed a patient's coronary arteries. This information assists your doctor in deciding which preventative measures to take, either prescribing medicine and/or diet with exercise to lower the risk of heart attack. Depending on the severity of blockage, surgery may also be an option. Another advantage of a Cardiac Angiogram is that it is a less invasive procedure than a Coronary Angiogram or Cardiac Catheterisation. These procedures may result in more complications related to vascular access into the artery, manipulation of a catheter and require a much greater recovery time. Cardiac Angiograms image the bone, soft tissue and blood vessels at the same time, and therefore may identify an alternative reason for the patient's symptoms. This may eliminate the need for surgery or if surgery is still a requirement it can be performed with much greater accuracy.

What are some common reasons for this procedure:

- Chest pain
- Unclear or inconclusive stress test results
- Low/intermediate risk of coronary artery disease with symptoms of chest pain not brought on with physical exertion
- Intermediate/high risk of coronary artery disease, but experience no typical signs eg. chest pain, fatigue during physical exertion or shortness of breath

Who does my CT Cardiac Angiogram and report?

The person who operates the equipment is a Radiographer. They are university trained and accredited with the Australian Institute of Radiography (AIR). The person who views and interprets the films is a doctor specialising in Radiology, known as a Radiologist. The Radiologist prepares a report for your doctor. The Radiologist has extensive advanced training and accreditation in CT Coronary Angiography.

What should I expect when I have my Cardiac Angiogram?

You will be asked to remove all metal objects such as keys, clips, buttons, coins, mobile phones etc and change into an examination gown. In the CT scanning room, the Radiographer will ask you to lie on your back on a scanner table and remain still for the duration of the scan. Three Electrocardiogram (ECG) leads will be placed on your chest and connected to an ECG machine. An injection of intravenous contrast (dye) is used to highlight the blood vessels being examined. You may experience a warm flushing sensation, metallic taste in your mouth and some may experience a feeling similar to bladder fullness. This should pass relatively quickly and is of no concern as it is a normal reaction to the administration of this contrast medium. You may be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds (longest 15 seconds). The scan generally only takes 20-30 minutes.

Are there any risk or side effects from my CT Cardiac Angiogram?

Having this scan will expose your body to a low level of radiation. No radiation remains after the test. Female patients who are pregnant or think they might be pregnant must advise the Radiographer of this upon arrival and before the examination. If there is any doubt, a different test that doesn't use x-rays may be performed. If no substitute test is appropriate then the test may be cancelled pending confirmation as to whether you are pregnant as x-rays may be harmful to the unborn child. The risk of harm from a diagnostic x-ray scan in an adult is very small and balanced against the risk of not performing the scan. The information gained from an x-ray, such as an early diagnosis and treatment may have significant health benefits. The skill of the operator and the design of the machine ensure you receive the lowest radiation dose possible.



Contrast

You will be provided with questionnaire/consent form when you arrive at Exact Radiology Clinics detailing the risks of the contrast medium (dye) used for this scan. The contrast will only be administered after you have given your consent (permission) to do so, which will be formally documented on the questionnaire/consent form with your signature. Once you leave the clinic, you may resume normal activities and diet.

How should I prepare for my Procedure?

When you phone to arrange your appointment one of our friendly reception staff will advise you of the preparation and requirements for this scan.

What is the cost of my CT Cardiac Angiogram?

This examination is not eligible for Medicare payment or your private health fund. Therefore you will incur a fee, which will be discussed with you at the time of booking your appointment.

Things to bring along to my appointment:

- Previous films for area of clinical interest.
- Referral (this is a legal requirement).

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