



## WHAT IS A CT SCAN?

A Computerised Tomography (CT) scan or CAT scan uses x-rays to create detailed cross sectional images of the body. CT scanning is an excellent medical tool used to detect a range of disorders and can be used to scan the majority of body parts. In particular, it may be used to diagnose subtle fractures, tumours, tiny kidney stones, strokes and narrowing or blockages of arteries. CT can also be used to look at the lungs, major body organs and bowel.

## HOW DOES CT WORK?

CT uses x-rays to measure the relative densities of structures in your body and displays this information as a black and white picture. Structures with very high density such as bone are displayed as white.

## WHO DOES MY SCAN 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 scans is a doctor specialising in Radiology, known as a Radiologist. The Radiologist will prepare a report for your doctor.

## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT WHEN I HAVE MY CT SCAN?

At the clinic you may be asked to change into a gown. All metal objects, such as keys, clips, buttons, coins and mobile phone must be removed from the path of the x-ray beam.

You will be asked to lie on the scanning table that will position you within the scanner. You must lie still during the scan as movement will blur the images. A series of planning scans will be performed at the start to localise the area of clinical interest. Following this, the main scan for images used in diagnosis are obtained. This is usually completed within a minute or two, sometimes within several seconds.

Depending on your examination, you may be asked to hold your breath. An injection of x-ray contrast, sometimes called 'dye', may need to be administered through a small plastic tube (cannula) which is generally inserted into a vein in your arm or the back of your hand. Again, this depends on the examination that is being performed, however as a general rule, this is required for most CT examinations of the neck, chest, abdomen and pelvis.

## CONTRAST

You will be provided with a questionnaire/consent form when you arrive at Exact Radiology Clinics detailing the risks of the contrast. The contrast (dye) will only be administered once you have given your consent (permission) to do so, which will need to be formally documented on the questionnaire/consent form with your signature. If it has been recommended to you by the staff at Exact Radiology Clinics that your scan requires contrast, it is because the information obtained during a scan with contrast yields significantly more information. If you do not wish to give your consent for use of contrast (dye), then you will need to discuss the examination with the Radiographer or Radiologist. Once you leave the clinic, you may resume normal activities and diet.

## ARE THERE ANY RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS FROM MY CT?

Your doctor has sent you for this test knowing that the information provided by the scan is more beneficial than the very low risk associated with it. The skill of the operator and the design of the machine ensure you receive the lowest radiation dose possible.

If you are **pregnant**, or it is possible that you may be pregnant, you must advise the staff at the time of booking, as a CT scan is usually not performed during pregnancy unless it is an absolute medical necessity to do so.

There is a small risk of adverse reaction following injection of x-ray contrast. This would normally be evident while you are still in the clinic and would be treated appropriately by the Radiologist.



## HOW DO I PREPARE FOR MY CT SCAN?

You will require an appointment for a CT scan.

Preparation for a CT examination can vary, for example fasting for 2 hours and/or drinking water prior to your scheduled appointment time. This is dependent upon what part of your body is being scanned.

When you phone to arrange your appointment one of our friendly staff will advise you of the preparation and requirements. They may ask questions relating to previous CT scans and clinical history regarding asthma, allergies and diabetes.

### **Things to bring along to your appointment:**

- Previous films for area of clinical interest.
- Referral (this is a legal requirement).
- Medicare or Department of Veterans' Affairs Card.
- Workcover claim number (if you have a current claim or if you intend lodging a claim with Workcover, please advise our reception staff).

## FEES

Exact Radiology Clinics bulk bill most Medicare eligible services, but some examinations do incur a fee.

When you make your appointment, the booking staff will advise if there is a fee applicable and payment is requested on the day of your examination.