

Patient Information

CTCA (CT Scan of Coronary Arteries)

What is a CTCA?

During a CTCA an ultra-fast computed tomography (CT) scanner to examine the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart, these vessels are known as coronary arteries (CA).

This scan involves injecting a contrast (a substance that enhances vascularity that would otherwise be hard to see on the radiograph) through an arm vein.

What preparation is required?

It is important to ensure that no products containing caffeine are consumed 24 hours prior to your examination. This includes coffee, tea, chocolate, energy drinks and soft drinks.

It is also important to not take any medication for erectile dysfunction for 3 days prior to your examination. All other medications can be taken as normal, on the day of the scan.

It is vital that patients are well hydrated for this scan and also fast from all food 2 hours prior to the examination time.

On the day of your appointment, it is important to arrive 75 minutes prior to your examination for a pre-exam assessment.

This pre-exam assessment will involve a Cardiac CT Radiographer monitoring your blood pressure and heart rate to determine if you require any beta-blocker medication (used to slow down the heart beat) before your scan. If beta-blockers are required, it will take 1 hour for the medication to take effect.

Your CTCA examination will be performed once the CT Radiographer is satisfied with your heart rate.

What happens during my Computed Tomography Coronary Artery scan (CTCA)?

You will be given a full explanation of the procedure by the Qscan Radiographer performing your examination. In most cases, you will be asked to change into a gown and have your blood pressure and heart rate monitored.

You will have a cannula (plastic needle) inserted in the vein near your elbow and an ECG lead placed on your chest. GTN (Nitrolingual spray) is administered under the tongue just before the scan to dilate your coronary arteries, this will assist in obtaining the best images possible. The GTN may give you a mild headache.

You may notice a warm sensation and a metallic taste during the contrast injection. This is normal. For some scans you may also be asked to hold your breath for up to 15 seconds and to lie flat for about 10-20 minutes.

It is important to allow for post procedure care and monitoring for a short period of time after the completion of the examination.

The effects of beta-blockers should wear off after half a day but please consider organising someone else to provide transport home, especially if you live far away.

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How long with the CTCA examination take?

Timing will depend on the examination you are having. Although the scan time is very fast, the work up process is quite involved and it is recommended that you allow at least 2 hours for pre-examination purposes.

What is the radiation dose?

All CTCA examinations are performed using the lowest radiation dose possible. As with any medical procedure, there are some small risks associated with the scan. Typical dose amounts range from around 0.5mSv – 2mSv depending on the size of the patient and technique.

At the lower dose, this amount of radiation is about half the amount of background radiation that you receive in a year from natural sources, such as cosmic rays.

How much will the examination cost?

When referred by a specialist, CTCA is bulk billed (no out of pocket expense to the patient) to Medicare, provided that all Medicare eligibility requirements have been met.

Referrals from GPs that do not meet the required Medicare clinical indications will incur an out of pocket expense. Further details can be provided at the time of your booking.

When can I get my results?

Due to the extensive image processing and detailed reporting that is required for CTCA examinations, your results will be available to be delivered by our Qscan Couriers to your referring doctor or collected onsite within 48 hours.

Urgent results can be provided upon request by the referring doctor.

When can I get my results?

Qscan Radiology Clinics have a range of convenient clinics located throughout South-East Queensland including: Carindale, Mater Private Clinic, Redcliffe, Windsor & Mermaid Waters.

For further details please call one of our friendly Qscan staff on **1300 177 226** or visit us at: **www.qscan.com.au**