Computerized Tomography Scan (CT Scan)

A CT scan is a special kind of x-ray that makes a set of pictures of a part of your body. It is a painless and safe way for your doctor to see **inside** your body. You may have heard this test called a "cat scan".

LET YOUR DOCTOR KNOW IF:

- You are pregnant or might be pregnant.
- You have an allergy to any medicine.
- You are allergic to any foods.
- You are allergic to iodine or x-ray dye.
- You have high blood pressure, kidney problems, diabetes, or asthma.
- You are taking medicine for diabetes.

BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

- You may eat a **small** breakfast or lunch (such as a bowl of cereal with milk).
- Do not eat enough food to make you full. You can drink 8 ounces of clear liquids like water, tea, broth, or Jell-O anytime before the test.
- If you are having a CT scan of your **head**, take off all earrings, hairpins, hair clips, or a wig.
- If you are having a CT scan of your **abdomen, chest, pelvis, or spine**, you will change into a hospital gown.
- Arrive a few minutes early. Bring a photo ID and your insurance card.
- You may or may not get an iodine dye (contrast). If you get the contrast dye, you may get it by IV (in the vein). This liquid will help your doctor read the images.

DURING THE PROCEDURE

- The CT tech will help you onto the scan table.
- If you are having a **body** (**such as abdomen, chest, pelvis, or liver**) CT scan, you will be asked to hold your breath and not move for a few seconds at a time. You must hold still while the scanner is taking pictures of you. If you move, your pictures will not be clear and must be taken again. This will make your test last longer.
- If you are having a **head** CT scan, the tech may or may not put a strap around your head. This will help to keep you from moving your head. Remember, it is very important to hold still while the CT scanner takes your pictures.

AFTER THE PROCEDURE

- After the CT scan, the nurses will remove the IV (if you have one).
- Drink enough water and fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow. Drinking fluids will help flush the contrast dye out of your body.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- You may go back to your usual activities.
- If you stopped taking medicine for the scan, check with your doctor about when you should take the next dose.

FINDING OUT THE RESULTS OF YOUR TEST

Make sure you know how you are to get your test results. If you do not get your results, make an appointment with your doctor to find out the results. Do not assume everything is normal if you have not heard from your doctor. It is your responsibility to find out the results of your testing.

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