

Preparation/Diet for a CT Exam with Contrast

Before your CT Appointment:

- You may eat a light meal up to 1 hour before your check-in time/prep-time
- Unless otherwise instructed, you may have fluids
- Drink at least 1 to 3 cups (8 to 24 ounces) of water or clear juice before your CT scan
- If you have a PEG/nasogastric feeding tube, you must stop your feedings 1 hour before your check-in time.

Take your medicines as usual unless otherwise instructed. Bring all of your prescription and nonprescription medicines in their original, labeled bottles. This includes vitamins, nutritional supplements, herbal products and over-the-counter drugs.

Intravenous (IV) contrast (dye) is often used with CT scans. Blood tests (BUN, Creatinine) should be completed at least 2 hours before your CT exam. If your blood tests were done within the last month by an outside facility, bring the results with you to your appointment. If you are currently receiving chemotherapy, your blood tests and results must be completed within 48 hours after receiving your chemotherapy. Arriving without blood test results may delay your CT appointment.

Precautions

Tell the CT staff if you:

- Have you ever had a severe reaction to intravenous contrast?
- Have been pre-medicated or need to be pre-medicated for a known contrast allergy
- Are diabetic and take:
 - - Insulin
 - - Metformin (Glucophage®, Glucovance®, Metaglip®, Avandamet® or Fontamet®)
- Are fasting for any other tests
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding
- Have fluid restrictions due to kidney or heart conditions
- Have received or will be receiving a radioactive iodine isotope (I-131)
- Have a PEG/nasogastric feeding tube in place
- Weigh more than 400 pounds (136.2 kilograms)
- Have a metal tracheostomy tube
- Have problems with constipation

For patients having a CT scan of the abdomen or pelvis with oral contrast: On the day of your CT scan, if you are scheduled for any of the following tests, you will need to have them **before** your CT scan:

- Hip x-ray
- Bone density test
- Bone survey
- Abdominal series
- Colonoscopy
- Any procedure that requires sedation or anesthesia.

If you are scheduled for an upper GI (barium swallow), you will need to have it **after** your CT scan.

You will be asked to drink oral contrast over a 60 to 90 minute period. Oral contrast allows your intestines and digestive system to be more visible on the CT scan.

Tell a staff member if you have had any of the following tests within the past 5 to 10 days:

- Barium Enema
- Upper GI series
- Radiation simulation test
- CT scan

If barium was used during your previous tests you will need to take a laxative. It will help to clear your body of the barium. On the day of your CT scan, you will have an x-ray to make sure there is no barium in your intestines.

Follow-up Care

Within 24 hours after the procedure, drink 6 to 8 glasses (½ to 1 liter) of water or juice. The liquids help remove the contrast media from your body. If you are unable to get rid of the barium within 24 hours, follow the instructions on the “Discharge Instructions After a Barium Procedure” handout or call your primary clinic.

Barium may cause bowel problems. If you feel constipated, you may take an over-the-counter laxative. **Do not** take Metformin (Glucophage®, Glucovance®, Metaglip®, Avandamet® or Fontamet®) for 48 hours after your IV contrast was administered. Ask your nurse for the handout ‘Discharge Instructions for Patients on Metformin’.

If you have any questions or concerns after the procedure, call our:

Radiology Department, 1-888-656-4273.