

## WHAT IS CTA (CT ANGIOGRAPHY)?

CT angiography uses a CT scanner to produce detailed images of both blood vessels and tissues in various parts of the body. A contrast agent is usually injected through a small catheter placed in a vein of the arm. A CT scan is then performed while the contrast flows through the blood vessels to the various organs of the body. After scanning, the images will be processed using a special computer and software and reviewed in different planes and projections. CTA's are performed on the brain, neck, heart, chest, abdomen, pelvis, legs, feet, arms, and hands.

## HOW IT WORKS

You will be given an iodinated contrast agent through an injection or asked to swallow this material. The contrast agent improves the quality of the test. The contrast travels through your bloodstream and collects in the area of your body that is being scanned. Please inform the technologist if you are allergic to iodine or any type of contrast agent. Please inform the technologist if you are pregnant. Many imaging tests are not performed during pregnancy.

**Please be advised of the following information before receiving any contrast agent.** If you have ever had an allergic reaction to any contrast agent, you may require a steroid prep the day before the test. Please consult your physician in regards to the steroid prep. If you are age 40 or older or a diabetic; you will need labs drawn prior to your contrasted exam. Please consult your physician in regards to these labs. If you are a dialysis patient please consult with your physician prior to receiving any contrast agent.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

You'll lie on a table while it moves into the CT machine. Your technician may ask you to hold your breath sometimes and keep still to get a more accurate picture.

Most CT scans take about 30 minutes.

The technologist will give you discharge instructions after the completion of the test.

## HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- Avoid eating or drinking for 4 hours prior to your scan if are to receive a contrast agent.
- Non-diabetic medications may be taken with a sip of water.
- If you are diabetic, please consult your physician as to any special instructions concerning your diabetes medication prior to the test.
- Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test.
- Depending on the part of your body getting the CT scan, you may need to change into a hospital gown to get a more accurate picture.
- Remove jewelry, removable dental hardware, eye glasses, and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images.

## RESULTS

A radiologist will review your images and send a report to your doctor who ordered the test in 48 hours. You'll get a call from your doctor's office to discuss the results and next steps.

To check your results in our secure, online patient portal, My UNC Chart, visit [www.myuncchart.org](http://www.myuncchart.org).