

CT Coronary Angiogram (CTCA)

WHAT IS A CT CORONARY ANGIOGRAM?

A CT Coronary Angiogram (CTCA) is a non-invasive imaging test to look at the arteries that supply blood to your heart. The test uses sophisticated x-ray and computer technology to collect huge amounts of information which can be transformed into detailed 2D and 3D images of your heart, heart arteries and great vessels. This test is becoming widely used to investigate patients with chest pain. Early stages of coronary narrowing can be detected before symptoms develop.

WHY HAVE A CT CORONARY ANGIOGRAM?

- A CTCA is mainly ordered to look for artery narrowings in patients with symptoms such as chest pain or breathlessness on exertion
- A CTCA can detect the build up of plaque in arteries before symptoms have developed, this can help guide a personalised prevention plan
- To look at bypass grafts after coronary artery bypass surgery

BEFORE THE SCAN

- Please avoid caffeine and nicotine the day of the scan.
- Please avoid food and drink 4 hours prior to the scan.
- You will fill in a safety questionnaire about your health allergies and kidney function. We may need to postpone the scan in case of severe allergy. You may need a blood test to measure kidney function prior to the scan.
- Viagra and other medicines that are contraindicated with nitrates should be avoided for 24 hours.
- You can drive to the scan and will be able to drive after.
- Please wear loose fitting clothing, women will be asked to remove bras with metal underwiring. Chest piercings should be removed where possible.
- If you were asked to take a beta blocker tablet on the day. Please take it 2 hours before your appointment time.
- An intravenous (IV) line will be inserted in your arm in our recovery area.

PATIENT INFORMATION: CT CORONARY ANGIOGRAM (CTCA)

The scan will be at the Great Western Hospital the radiology department will contact you to arrange an appointment time, their number is 01793 605051.

DURING THE SCAN

- Electrodes will be placed on your chest to measure your heart rate
- You may be given IV beta blocker medicine to slow down your heart
- You may be given a spray of medicine, GTN (nitrate), under the tongue
- The whole process takes around five minutes, the final scanning portion takes 15 seconds, and the rest is preparation to get the best images.
- You will be given detailed instructions to hold your breath. This slows the heart rate and keeps the heart in one place. It is important to stay as still as possible.
- You will be lying on the scanner table having an injection of x-ray contrast just before the pictures are taken. The table will then slide through the x-ray tube. You will feel a wave of warmth passing down your body at this stage which is short lived.

AFTER THE SCAN

- The team will check the picture quality before you leave the room
- Occasionally you may feel nauseated or dizzy and need a little while to recover, this should pass. Once you feel well you can go.
- A Radiologist will read the scan and send the report to your doctor you will not usually get a report on the day.

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