



St. Luke's Imaging Services Patient/Family Information

CTA – Coronary Artery Scan

What is CTA Coronary Artery scan?

CTA or computed tomography angiography – is a valuable procedure which combines x-ray and computer technology to make a clear picture specifically of the blood vessels in the body. This exam looks specifically at the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart - the coronary arteries.

The CTA exam involves tiny x-ray pictures, called "slices," taken in a circular movement around the body while x-ray dye is injected through a vein. The computer pulls the slices together and puts them on a video monitor for a radiologist – a doctor who specializes in radiologic medicine. The image represents an image of an area of blood vessels in the body and can provide a "view" that may not be visible on a regular x-ray.

Special Note

Before the exam, please tell your doctor if you are or think you may be pregnant or are nursing.

It is also important to inform the CT technologist if you have any allergies or have had a reaction to x-ray dye in the past.

Preparation

No food or carbonated drinks 2 hours prior to exam. Clear liquids can be taken up to 1 hour prior to exam. Drink 30-40 oz of water prior to coming into your appointment (unless you are on a fluid restriction).

If the appointment time is scheduled before noon, drink the water over a 4-6 hour time-frame the evening before. If the appointment is scheduled after noon, drink the water over a 4-6 hour time-frame in the morning of the exam.

An IV will be placed before the exam to inject x-ray dye that is used during this exam to outline the blood vessels on the images. Labs may need to be drawn prior to the exam.

If you are 60 or older, have diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease or have undergone an exam within the previous seven days where contrast material (x-ray dye) was injected into your body, you will need to have a blood test before this procedure to check for kidney function.

Please bring your medication list with you to your exam.

Medications such as nitroglycerin and beta blockers may be given before the exam.

What Happens During the Test?

You may be asked to undress and wear a hospital gown for the images. EKG (heart) patches will be applied to your chest and your heart rate will be monitored during the exam to help in taking the pictures. You will lie on your back with your arms above your head on a table that will be moved into the CT machine or scanner where the images will be taken. Except for the movement of the table, you should not feel anything.

You must remain as still as possible during this procedure, and you'll be asked to hold your breath for 10 to 15 seconds as each scan is taken. It's important to do this for each scan. It is during this time that an x-ray dye may be injected through the IV. You may feel very warm and flushed for a few minutes, which is very normal. However, if you should feel itchy, short of breath or uncomfortable, please tell the CT technologist.

After the Exam:

- You may go back to your regular diet after the exam, unless otherwise directed by your doctor.
- You should drink plenty of fluids the rest of the day after receiving x-ray dye. The dye will go out through your urine and you will not be able to see it.

When Will I Know the Results?

The radiologist and/or a cardiologist will review and interpret the scan shortly after the exam is completed. A written report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss these results with you.

Please allow your physician the time needed to review these results.

Outpatient Instructions

Please register 30 minutes before the scheduled exam time at the Outpatient Registration desk at the West Entrance. After registering, testing will be done in the Imaging Services department on the second floor. Please use the elevators past registration on the left.

Name _____

Exam date/time _____