



# CT Coronary Angiogram

## What is a CT Coronary Angiogram (CTCA)?

A CT (computerised tomography) scan is a special X-ray test that allows us to take detailed images of the body. A CTCA scan takes pictures of the heart and coronary arteries, which allows us to see any narrowing or blockage of the arteries around the heart.

## How is a CTCA scan carried out?

Our Radiographer will ask you to lie on a special bed that will move through the scanner. We will place electrodes (sticky pads connected to leads) on your chest; this allows us to monitor the electrical activity of your heart. The bed moves through the scanner so we can take pictures of your heart and arteries.

A special contrast (sometimes called dye) is injected through a vein in your arm via a cannula so we can see your blood vessels clearly.

It can be difficult for us to get a clear picture of your heart if it is beating too quickly. When you arrive, we will check your heart rate; if it is faster than the ideal rate, we may give you some medication to slow it down during the scan. We may also give you a medicine to open your arteries which makes them easier to assess, it is normally administered under your tongue, in a spray or tablet form. This medicine can cause you to have a slight headache or feel a little dizzy. During the scan you will be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds. This also helps to stop any blurring of the images.

The scan takes around 15 minutes, but you will be asked to stay with us for up to an hour because of the medicines we give you.

## Is there any risk from the radiation?

The amount of radiation used for the scan is kept to a minimum. We believe the benefits of the scan far outweigh the risk to your health.

## Preparation

- Fast for four hours before your scan,
- No fluids for one hour before your scan,
- No caffeine or smoking for 24 hours before your scan,
- Please avoid driving or cycling to and from your appointment as the medication can make you drowsy,
- Take all your other medications normally,
- Please inform us if you have any allergies or are diabetic.

**Please ask** - This information does not replace the need for personal advice from a healthcare professional. Please ask us if you have any questions.

### How to contact us

#### Cardiac CT / MRI Department

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