

CT (CAT) SCAN

QUICK FACTS:

- A CT scan takes images of your child's body called 'slices,' and then puts them together to create a final image by using a computer.
- Your child **WILL** have an IV placed if ordered **WITH** contrast.
- Your child will be awake throughout this exam unless exam is ordered with anesthesia.
- Your child can partake in normal activities afterward if exam is without anesthesia.
- Length of exam will vary depending on the type of CT scan ordered for your child.



ABOUT THE CT SCAN:

- Your child will be asked to lie down on a table on the CT scanner.
- At this time, the CT Technologist will place a wide strap over your child to help them remain still during the exam and to maintain safety throughout the CT, and will place your child's head in the headrest.
- The CT Technologist will then place a lead covering over your child.
- If your child's CT scan is ordered **WITH** contrast, an IV **WILL** be placed in your child's hand or arm at this time.
- If your child's CT scan is **NOT** ordered with contrast, your child will **NOT** be receiving an IV.
- While your child is lying on the table, the CT Technologist will then move the table into the scanner to ensure the right body part is under the camera for imaging.
- Once your child is positioned correctly under the camera, the CT scan will begin.
- At certain times during the exam, the CT Technologist will not be in the scan room with you. They will be in an attached room where equipment controls are. There is a large window connecting these rooms, which means the CT Technologist will always be able to watch your child throughout the entire exam. An intercom system will allow you to speak with them and for them to speak with you.
- Depending on your child's age and the scan ordered, your child may be asked to hold their breath during certain pictures. The CT Technologist will instruct your child on how and when to do so.
- If your child had an IV placed, this is how liquid contrast will be given to your child. When contrast is injected, your child may feel a flush of warmth and/or a funny taste in their mouth. This is completely normal and will go away shortly. Your child may also feel as though they wet their pants. This is normal as well.
- When the scan is finished and all images are taken, the table will slide out of the scanner and the exam is complete.

PEOPLE YOU MAY MEET:

- Nurse (RN)
- CT Technologist
- Anesthesia team*
- Child Life Specialist*

*Anesthesia will be present for anesthesia cases.

*Child Life is available depending on your child's appointment time, needs, and developmental level.



PARENT/ GUARDIAN'S ROLE DURING EXAM:

- Parents and guardians are welcome to be present during exam to support their child, or may stay in “holding” area.
 - Due to use of radiation, women who believe there is a possibility they may be pregnant or are pregnant will not be allowed in room while CT is being used. These women may be with their child during times when radiation will not be used such as during positioning and IV placement (if needed).
- Medical staff will instruct parents/guardians on where to sit/stand while in the room to help the exam run smoothly.
- Parents/guardians know their children best. We welcome any suggestions to help your child cope during the exam.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to help their child relax and keep calm and still during the exam.
- Parents/guardians are also a great help when encouraging the child to take breaths if instructed to do so.
- If your child has any comfort items such as stuffed animals, pacifiers, small handheld toys, or blankets, you are more than welcome to bring those along.

AFTER THE EXAM:

- If your child is awake and had an IV placed, it will be removed after the end of the exam.
- After a CT scan your child can resume normal activities and diet.
- If your child received contrast for the first time, they will be monitored for about 15-20 minutes after the exam.

AFTER THE EXAM WITH ANESTHESIA:

- After a CT scan with anesthesia, your child will be taken to a recovery area to be monitored until the medication wears off.
- This recovery time usually has a **MINIMUM** of one hour.



ADDITIONAL INFO:

- This informational sheet is to provide basic knowledge of a CT scan. Exam experiences may vary depending on the following factors:
 - Whether your child needs contrast through IV
 - Type of CT scan ordered
 - Your child's age
 - Use of anesthesia
- Your nurse for the exam will explain the exam in detail, so please feel free to ask questions if needed. We as a hospital team are here to support both you and your child throughout your experience.