

Computed Tomography Coronary Angiogram (CTCA)

Radiology

Patient Information Leaflet

Having a Computed Tomography Coronary Angiogram (CTCA)

This leaflet gives general information about CTCA. It does not replace the need for personal advice from a qualified healthcare professional.

Please ask us if you have any questions.

What is a CTCA scan?

A CT (computed tomography) scan is a special x-ray scan that takes detailed pictures of your body. A CTCA scan takes pictures of your heart and coronary arteries. This allows us to see any blockages or narrowing of the arteries supplying your heart.

How is CTCA scan carried out?

You will be asked to lie on a special bed.

We will place sticky patches on your chest so that the ECG can monitor your heart during the scan. We then trigger the scan to take a picture at a certain point during your heartbeat. This gives high quality images of your heart.

We will inject some x-ray contrast (dye) so that we can see your heart and arteries clearly. The dye is usually safe but you should tell us if you have any allergies. The dye will pass through your system.

It can be difficult to get clear pictures of your heart if your heart is beating too quickly. We may give you some medication to slow it down, usually a drug called a beta-blocker. Please try to avoid driving or cycling to or from your appointment as it can make you drowsy. It is a good idea if someone comes with you to the appointment. When your heart rate is slow enough, we will perform the scan. You will need to stay in the department for a short while after the medication for observation.

We may also give another medication in a spray under your tongue, called GTN spray. This opens up the arteries allowing us to see them better on the scan. You may get a slight headache or feel a little dizzy from this.

Breathing can cause the pictures to become blurry. We will therefore ask you to hold your breath for no more than 15 seconds during the scan. We will practise this with you before the scan.

How long will the scan take?

Around 15 minutes. However, we do need to prepare for the scan and you may need to stay for a short period of observation afterwards. Please allow up for up to 90 minutes in total.

How should I prepare?

Please avoid caffeinated drinks such as coffee, tea, and fizzy drinks for 24 hours prior to the scan. Decaffeinated tea and coffee also contain caffeine and should be avoided. Also avoid strenuous exercise and smoking where possible.

Take your medication as prescribed and bring a list of your usual medication. If you are diabetic and on metformin, please contact us before the appointment on 01524 511911. If you use an inhaler please bring it with you.

What are the benefits of CTCA?

A CTCA scan gives detailed images of your heart which help us to make a diagnosis. We can then suggest the best treatment for you. Although other tests provide information on how well the heart is functioning, only a CTCA scan gives us enough information about the structure of your heart.

Leaflet Details

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Other formats

If you would like to receive this information in an alternative format, then please contact : 01539 795497.

Travelling to our hospitals

For the best way to plan your journey visit our website:
<http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): 01539 795497.

Useful Contact Details

NHS 111 (for 24 hour urgent health advice): telephone 111

Your Information

If you would like to know how we use, share, disclose and secure your information and your rights of access to the information we hold about you, visit the Trust's website: <http://www.UHMB.nhs.uk/> or contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01539 795497.

Evidence

Details of the evidence used in writing this leaflet are available on request from: Patient Information Officer at 01524 512476.

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact PALS on 01539 795497.

UHMBT is a no smoking Trust. Smoking is not permitted on any of the hospital sites. You can contact the NHS North Lancashire Stop Smoking services on the number below:

NHS Quit Squad - **0800 328 6297**

If you live in Cumbria, please call **0300 013 3000** to find a local pharmacy who are offers 1-2-1 support and nicotine replacement therapy.

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