CT SCAN

WHAT IS A CT SCAN
A Computerized Tomography (CT) scan uses x-rays to take cross-sectional pictures of inside the body which provide more detail than traditional x-rays. For the CT, you will be asked to lay flat on the CT table which will then rise up and move as you are passed through a large circular machine. Some scans do require you to hold your breath for a short period of time to minimize movement on the images. You may also be asked to drink contrast or receive it through an IV to improve visualization of your internal organs. Depending on the type of CT ordered, the scan may take anywhere between 15 to 60 minutes to complete.

PREPARING FOR YOUR CT SCAN
You may be asked to change into pants/gown/robe as necessary for your scan. You may also need to remove any metal including jewelry & piercings. A locker will be provided to store your belongings during the exam. You will need to complete a CT pre-screening questionnaire if you are having IV contrast for your test. Depending on what type of scan you are having, you may be required to fast for four hours prior to your scan.

We ask that you arrive at least 15 minutes before your CT scan, unless instructed otherwise. If you arrive past your appointment time, we will do our best to accommodate you, and you may be asked to reschedule or wait until our next available appointment opens. We appreciate your attention to this in efforts to help us serve you better.

LAB WORK
If your CT requires IV contrast dye, you may need blood work completed before your CT if you have not had any within 30 days. Your provider may order blood work (creatinine/GFR) to be done prior to the CT scan to evaluate your kidney function and determine if it is safe to administer IV contrast.

If you are or have any of the following please inform your provider before your appointment is scheduled or notify a technologist prior to exam start.

- pregnant (or think you may be pregnant)
- nursing an infant
- have a known or suspected allergy to CT IV contrast

Per F&MCW Imaging policy, children under 18 must be supervised by a responsible adult, which is not the patient.

Froedttert & the Medical College of Wisconsin is an academic system; students, interns, or residents (doctors) may be involved in your care.

TYPES OF CT SCANS AND WHAT TO EXPECT

Head, Face and/or Neck:
Generally speaking, if you are having a CT scan of the head and neck, you will not need to change out of your clothing as long as all metal is removed and out of the scan region. We do ask that you remove any necklaces and piercings that you may be wearing and wear clothing with no metal in those areas.

Chest, Abdomen, and/or Pelvis:
You may be required to fast for four hours prior to your CT scan. You may be asked to change into a gown and robe for these scans to ensure all metal is removed (zippers, buttons, underwire bras, etc.) and allow easy access for IV starts, if necessary. Wearing loose, comfortable clothing with no metal may also be acceptable.

Some CT scans require you to drink water or oral contrast:
Water: You may be asked to arrive 30 minutes early to drink water prior to your scan to hydrate your system and provide a better view of your internal organs.

Oral Contrast: You may be asked to arrive 1 hour early to drink oral contrast for 45 – 60 minutes prior to your scan to help highlight your hollow organs such as your stomach and intestines.

CT scans with IV contrast:
IV contrast is used to highlight the blood vessels and organs within your body. The IV contrast is administered during the CT scan through an IV that is started in your arm prior to the exam. During the administration of the IV contrast many people experience a metallic taste in their mouth and a warm sensation throughout their body. This goes away as soon as the contrast is finished.*If you have an allergy to CT IV contrast, a premedication regimen may be required*