



A guide to...

CT Coronary Angiogram

Patient information

How to contact us

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If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 187** or email westherts.pals@nhs.net



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This is general information about a CT coronary angiography scan (CTCA). It does not replace the need for personal advice from a healthcare professional. Please ask us if you have any questions.

Contact us

Watford Cardiac Scanner Telephone: **01923 436 549**

What is a CT coronary angiography scan?

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 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. We will check your heart rate when you arrive and if it is faster than the ideal rate, we may give you some medication to slow it down.

We may also give you a medicine under the tongue, in spray or tablet form, to open your arteries. This makes them easier to assess. You may get a slight headache or feel a little dizzy from this.

During the scan you will be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds. This stops 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 time
- No fluids for one hour before your scan
- No caffeine for 24 hours before your scan
- No 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 medications normally
- Please inform us if you have any allergies or you are diabetic.

Further information

Further information can be found on the following website www.rcr.ac.uk/patients