

700 Children's Drive
Columbus, Ohio 43205-2696
nationwidechildrens.org

CT SCAN

A CT (Computed Tomography) scan is a type of x-ray that takes pictures of your child's body. The CT machine does not hurt or touch your child, but he or she must lie very still while the x-rays are being taken.

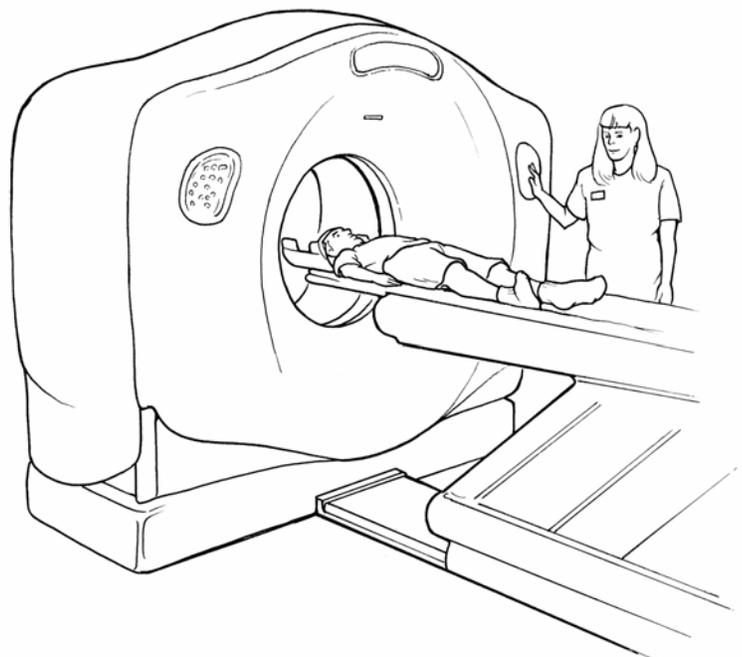
Different preparation is needed for this test, depending on the part of the body being scanned. In general there is no special preparation for this test.

If any special preparation is needed, these instructions will be given when the doctor's office calls Children's Hospital to schedule your child's test.

BEFORE THE TEST

- **Be sure to tell the technologist if there is any chance you may be pregnant.** Please talk about the scan with your child before the test so he or she will understand what the technologist will be doing. The technologist will tell you how long the test will take. Feel free to ask any questions before and after the test. Parents may stay with their child during the CT scan, *except for pregnant females.*
- The technologist may give some *contrast solution* in the child's vein through a small needle (or IV). Your child will feel a little stick at first, but if he holds still it will last only a few seconds.
- The *contrast medium* circulates in the blood and makes certain parts of the child's body show up clearly on the x-rays.
- Please arrive at the requested registration time. However, please be aware that from time to time, the schedule gets behind or delayed. When this happens, the technologist or nurse will be sure to keep you informed of when the scan will be done.

| For Outpatient Use Only | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child's name | _____ |
| APPOINTMENT: | |
| Date | _____ |
| Scan time | _____ |
| Please bring your child to the Radiology Department Registration Desk in the main building of Children's Hospital on the first floor. | |
| Arrival time: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If your child needs to be sedated, you need to arrive 60 minutes before your scan time. A nurse will complete a history and physical and explain the sedation that will be used. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If your child does not need to be sedated , please arrive 20 minutes before your scan time. This allows time to register. |
| If you need to cancel your appointment or reschedule, call (614) 722-6200. | |

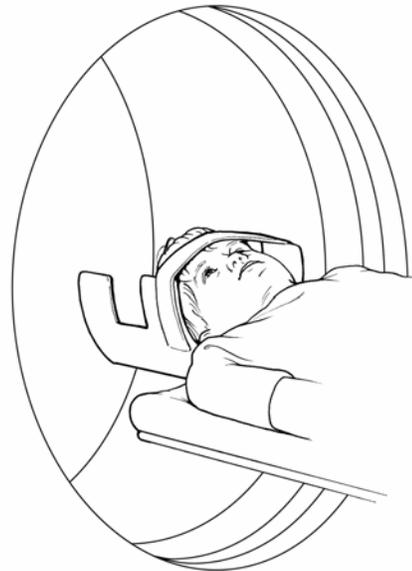


Picture 1 Having a CT Scan

- **Sedation** - If your child cannot hold still while the pictures are being taken, he *may* need to be given some medicine (sedation) to help him relax and make him sleepy. A nurse will complete a history and physical exam on your child, and explain the sedation.
 - **If your child is ill with a fever, “stuffy nose”, or cough, you may need to be rescheduled.** Please call the Radiology Department and speak to a technologist or nurse.
 - **A parent or legal guardian needs to be here if the child is to be sedated.** They will need to give information on the child’s health and sign a form giving consent for sedation. If a parent or guardian is not available, please have a phone number where a nurse can reach them at the time of the test.
 - If your child is to be sedated, it may be helpful to bring your stroller from home.
- **Food and drink** – Your child may eat normally until 6 hours before the test. Your child may have *clear liquids* (water, clear apple juice, 7-Up, Pedialyte®) up to 2 hours before the test.
- **Medicine** – Sedation medicine is given by mouth, by rectum (in the child’s bottom), or by IV. The radiologist and nurse will decide how the medicine will be given, depending on the age and weight of your child and the length of the test.
- Twenty to 30 minutes before an IV is started, the nurse may put a numbing cream on your child’s hand or arm.

HOW THE TEST IS DONE

- For the test, your child will be placed on a padded table. Straps, like seat belts in a car, will be placed across his body and fastened to the table to keep him from moving or falling off.
- If your child is having a brain CT scan, anything on his or her head (such as metal hair clips, a hat, glasses, or a wig) will be removed. A strap will be placed across his forehead and soft pillows will be placed beside his ears to help hold his head still.
- If a scan of your child's abdomen is being taken, he or she will need to **drink oral contrast solution before the scan**. The contrast is mixed with Hawaiian Punch.
- If your child prefers another kind of juice, bring 16 ounces with you. The contrast can be mixed in any juice.
- His or her arms will be placed above the head and held in place with tape or straps so they are not in the picture. You may also be asked to hold your child’s hands during the scan.



Picture 2 A CT scan of the head.

- If your child has been sedated, he or she will be placed on a heart monitor and pulse oximeter so the nurse can check your child’s heart rate and breathing during the CT scan and afterwards in recovery. The nurse will be outside the room during the test, but will be able to see and monitor your child.
- The technologist will move the table so that the area to be scanned is just inside the opening of the CT machine (Picture 1, page 1). Then the technologist will go into another room to start the CT machine. The technologist will stay in the other room to run the machine, but will always be able to see your child through the window and talk to him through an intercom system.

- Your child will hear a buzzing sound when the CT machine starts. The CT machine moves around the part of the body being scanned and makes a whirring sound. As it moves, X-ray beams are sent out. X-ray detectors pick up these beams. They are measured and collected in the memory of the computer. The computer makes a picture of the section of the body on a film.
- Your child must hold his body very still until the motor stops running. The technologist will watch the monitor to see that the pictures are being taken correctly.

AFTER THE TEST

If your child has been sedated, you will need to stay in the CT recovery area for 30 minutes to one hour after the test is done. He needs to be fully awake before going home.

- Your child should not return to school or child care on the day of the CT scan. He needs to be supervised by a parent or other caregiver the rest of the day.
- Your child will be given apple juice, a cola drink, or a drink brought from home.
- The nurse will give you home-going instructions for your child.
- A report of the CT scan will be sent to your child's doctor within 48 hours. Your child's doctor will explain the test results and the plan for medical care.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse, or call the CT Department at (614) 722-2394.