

Brain CT Scans

Appointment Information

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Address: _____

Notes: _____

About

Computed tomography (CT) of the brain is performed to look at the structures of the brain and to help detect:

- bleeding, brain injury and skull fractures in patients with head injuries.
- Bleeding caused by a ruptured or leaking aneurysm in a patient with a sudden severe headache.
- a blood clot or bleeding within the brain shortly after a patient exhibits symptoms of a stroke.
- a stroke.
- brain tumors.
- enlarged brain cavities (ventricles) in patients with hydrocephalus.
- diseases or malformations of the skull.

For a brain CT, you will be positioned on the moveable examination table, usually lying flat on your back or less commonly, on your side or on your stomach.

Next, the table will move quickly through the scanner to determine the correct starting position for the scans. Then, the table will move slowly through the machine as the actual CT scanning is performed.

You may be asked to hold your breath during the scanning. Any motion, whether breathing or body movements, can lead to artifacts on the images.

When the brain CT examination is completed, you will be asked to wait until the technologist verifies that the images are of high enough quality for accurate interpretation.

A brain CT scan is usually completed within 15 minutes.

Preparations

You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing to your brain CT scan. However, you may be given a gown to wear during the procedure.

Metal objects, including jewelry, eyeglasses, dentures and hairpins, may affect the CT images and should be left at home or removed prior to your brain CT. You may also be asked to remove hearing aids and removable dental work.

Also inform your radiologist or technologist of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions and whether you have a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse effect.

Women should always inform their radiologist or technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant before having a brain CT scan performed.

You should have nothing to drink 2 hours prior to the exam.