

CARDIAC COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY ANGIOGRAM (CTA)

OVERVIEW

A cardiac CTA looks at the vessels supplying your heart muscle, called coronary arteries. This test can evaluate the presence of soft (fatty) and hard (calcified) plaque and estimate the degree of narrowing of a vessel.

PREPARING FOR A YOUR TEST

Your care team will discuss specific instructions prior to your test. Those include:

- No erectile dysfunction medication 24 hours prior to test
- No metformin, metaglip, glucovance or glucophage 24 hours prior and 48 hours after test
- No caffeine, exercise, Sudafed or antihistamines 12 hours prior to test
- No smoking one hour prior to test
- Drink two, eight (8) ounce glasses of water one hour prior to test
- Clear liquids only four (4) hours prior to test

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to your appointment at The Christ Hospital main campus or 15 minutes prior to your appointment if you are scheduled at an outpatient center.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR CARDIAC CTA

This test is performed inside a specialized CT scanner. Since the heart is constantly moving, it needs to be slowed down to be able to take a "snapshot." You will be asked to take a medication called metoprolol the evening before and the morning of the procedure.

When you arrive, an IV will be placed in your arm. If your heart rate is still too high (we like it to be less than 60), you will receive an additional IV dose of metoprolol.

Once the heart rate is acceptable, you will be placed in a CT scanner and receive sublingual nitroglycerin to dilate your coronary arteries for their snapshot. You will also receive a contrast injection and given instruction to hold your breath. You will feel flushed with a warm sensation when contrast circulates through your body.

The entire procedure with preparation time takes around one hour, but the time inside the scanner is just a few minutes.