

## Common Research Procedures: CT Scans

### What is computed tomography (CT)?

Computed tomography (CT) is a procedure that uses x-ray equipment to create cross-sectional pictures of what is happening on the inside of your body. During the scan you will lie on a narrow platform bed as it slides through the scanner, which is shaped like a large donut. A CT scanner creates clear and detailed pictures of bones, organs, tissues, and blood vessels.

### Questions to ask:

1. Is this CT being done specifically for the research study or is it also a part of my regular medical care?
2. Where will I go for my CT scan?
3. How many scans will be needed?
4. Do I need to do anything special to prepare for the scan?
5. Will I receive medical dye (“contrast”) for this scan?
6. What happens if the scan reveals a medical issue?
7. Will I receive the results of the scan?
8. Where will my images be kept?
9. How will my privacy be protected?
10. What happens if I decide to leave the study early?



Tufts

CTSI  
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More questions?  
Call:

version # (v1.0)



# CT Scans

# For Research

*This brochure contains general information for educational purposes and is not intended to provide medical advice. Talk with your doctor or research team before acting on any information contained herein for advice specific to your situation.*



**Participating in research is your choice.  
Be informed. Ask questions. Get answers.**

## **How should I prepare for a CT scan?**

Talk with the research staff so that you understand how to prepare for the CT scan. When a CT scan is part of research study, additional steps may be needed. The research team will go over this information with you. Make sure you understand what to expect before, during and after the scan.

## **What are the risks of undergoing a CT scan?**

CT scans are considered to be quite safe and relatively painless. CT scans involve radiation and there are small risks associated with radiation exposure. Specific risks will be described in detail in the Informed Consent Form. Make sure you understand those risk as they relate to the CT scan as well as to the overall research.

## **What's different about a CT scan used for research?**

If you have a CT scan as part of your regular medical care, your doctor is usually trying to check your health or diagnose a problem. When a CT scan is part of a research study, the scan is used to help answer a scientific question. It is not intended to provide you medical care or detect health problems.

Unlike a standard CT scan where you and your doctor would discuss the results, the research team might not share the results of the CT scan with you. Your scans might be reviewed as part of a larger group of scans and not looked at individually.

## **Participating in research is a choice**

Protections are in place to help assure the safety of research volunteers (also called “research subjects”) and ensure volunteers are treated with respect. The research team will go over an Informed Consent Form with you. They will explain the study’s goals and possible risks and benefits. Ask for help if you don’t understand something. You should never feel rushed or pressured. Being part of a research study is completely voluntary – it’s your choice. You can change your mind, at any time, for any reason.

