

# CT - cardiac calcium scoring

## What is a CT scan?

Computed Tomography (CT) is a fast, effective and accurate way of using x-rays to take pictures in very fine slices through the part of the body that the doctor has asked to be investigated.

CT scanners can produce multiple slices of the body in one single rotation and the CT computer is able to stack these slices together to create images in multiple planes. With all of these different slices and 3D reconstructions, the radiologist will have a very detailed picture of the structures making up your body. This will help them to make a diagnosis so that the right treatment can be planned as soon as possible.

## What is calcium scoring?

Calcium in the coronary arteries is the main form of hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis). This does not directly correspond to the percentage of narrowing in the arteries, but it does correlate with the amount of coronary plaque and the risk of myocardial infarction (heart attack). So, the lower the calcium score, the lower the chances of having an adverse cardiac event.

## What preparation is required?

There is no preparation required prior to your scan.

## What is involved?

You are required to change into a gown from the waist up. Three ECG dots are placed on your chest (males may require a few small spots to be shaved on the chest) and you will be lying down on your back with arms raised above your head on the CT table.

The CT scanner is programmed to tell you when to hold your breath and when to breathe normally. This is done three times with the last breath hold being the actual diagnostic scan. The scanner only turns on the x-rays for a short time during each heartbeat. This minimises movement in the images and decreases the radiation dose to you.

## Are there any side effects?

No. If you have any concerns, please contact the department and speak with one of our staff.

## How long will my scan take?

Once you are gowned and have the ECG dots placed on your chest the test will take approximately five minutes.

## How do I get my results?

Digital images are immediately available to your doctor and your records will be kept permanently. This occurs through a system called PACS. **If a priority report is requested it will be issued within two hours and faxed or emailed to your doctor, however this can sometimes take up to 24 hours.**

If your referring doctor wants to see you on the day of your examination, please advise the reception staff when you arrive for your appointment, so the appropriate information can be made available for you to take to your doctor.

## How much will this cost?

Please discuss this with the receptionist in Cabrini Medical Imaging at the time of booking your procedure.

## Important

**It is important to let us know when you make your booking if you are or think you may be pregnant or are breastfeeding.**

It is important to bring with you your referral, previous x-rays and any other tests (only if previous ones were **not** done at Cabrini or I-MED).

## Questions

For more information or to make an appointment, please contact Cabrini Medical Imaging using the number below.