

*Danbury Hospital Patient Education Sheet***What is a Coronary Cat Scan Angiography (Coronary CTA)?****Why is a Coronary CTA test ordered?**

Patients who are most likely to benefit from coronary CTA are those who have symptoms that are not typical, and are of intermediate risk for coronary artery disease. A nuclear cardiology stress test is more appropriate to define myocardial ischemia. In patients with typical chest pain, conventional angiography (heart catheterization), may be more suitable, as this procedure can be followed by an intervention.

However, in rare cases, poor blood flow of the myocardium, or heart muscle, is missed during a nuclear cardiology test because of multiple blockages in all the coronary arteries. If the nuclear cardiology examination is negative but there is reason to think that blood flow is poor, non-invasive coronary CTA can show whether there are blockages present. Non-invasive Coronary CTA can rule out coronary blockages with high accuracy. It can also evaluate if there are blockages in heart by-pass grafts and arteries that have had stents placed in them.

Added advantages of Coronary CTA, is that it can visualize the heart and blood vessels, and can evaluate a calcium score. Because calcium is a marker of coronary artery disease, the amount of calcium detected on a cardiac CT scan is a helpful diagnostic tool. The findings on cardiac CT are expressed as a calcium score. Normally, the coronary arteries do not contain calcium. Calcium in the coronary arteries is a sign of coronary artery disease (CAD).

Coronary CTA does have limitations. It is not able to image people with irregular heart rhythms. Very obese patients or those with heavily calcified arteries may also not benefit from this exam.

How long will this test take?

Plan to be in the testing area for approximately forty-five (45) minutes.

Is there any special preparation prior to the test?

Do not exercise the day before the test. Do not eat or drink anything four (4) hours before the test. Do not eat or drink anything with caffeine 12 hours before the test. A list of medications containing caffeine is provided below. Consult your doctor before stopping any medication. Unless otherwise directed by your doctor, take all of your regular daily medications. Do not take erectile dysfunction medications for forty-eight (48) hours prior to the test, a list of these drugs are provided below.

Your doctor may prescribe a beta-blocker to take before your test. Make sure you read and follow all of the directions for taking this medication. A beta-blocker is given to decrease your heart rate. A heart rate between 50 & 59 beats per minute is desirable. This is a sensitive test and a heart rate in this range enhances the quality of the images. If you have a history of allergic reactions to medications you may also be given additional medications prior to the test.

A Registered Nurse will phone you 48-72 hours before your test to go over your health history and answer any questions you may have. It is recommended that you leave your jewelry at home and that you wear loose comfortable clothing as an intravenous (IV) will be placed in your arm. Women should avoid wearing a bra with an underwire.

Medications Containing Caffeine:

- Cafegot (all forms)
- Darvon compounds
- Wigraine (all forms)
- Synalgos-DC
- Fiorinal
- Excedrin
- Anacin

Medications Containing Theophylline:

- Aerolate
- Bronkodyl
- Constant-T
- Elixophylline SR
- Theodur Sprinkle
- Theoclear L.A.
- Quibron-T/SR
- Slo-bid Gyrocaps
- Theophylline SR
- Theospan Jr.
- Duracap
- Theobid Duracap
- Theovent L.A.
- Theochron
- Theotair
- Respid
- Theospan-SR
- Theodur
- Uniphyl
- Sustaire
- Theo-24
- Slo-Phyllin
- Gyrogapas

Erectile Dysfunction Medications

- Viagra (Sildenafil)
- Levitra (Vardenafil)
- Uprima (Ampomorphine)
- Cialis (Tadalafil)

What can I expect the day of the test?

- After you have registered, a Registered Nurse will escort you into a prep area, where your blood pressure, heart rate and EKG will be obtained. If at that time your heart rate is greater than 59 beats per minute, the Cardiologist may decide to give you an additional medication known as metoprolol (Lopressor).
- Metoprolol (Lopressor) has the ability to lower your heart rate into the range of 50- to 59 beats per minute. There are a number of side effects associated with metoprolol (Lopressor), including but not limited to: Low blood pressure, diarrhea, dizziness, headache, and allergic reaction. It is important to note that most people will have minimal to no side effects; however, the Registered Nurse will monitor for any changes.
- An intravenous (IV) will be inserted into a vein of your arm.
- Once it is determined that your heart rate is in the recommended range, you will be escorted into the CT room and will be instructed to lie down on the table by the CT technologist.

- You will be connected to the EKG machine on the CT scanner, and your IV will be connected to the contrast dye.
- Just prior to beginning the test, an initial CT scan of your chest is performed to identify the exact location of your heart in your chest.
- Once this initial CT scan is done, you will receive a Nitroglycerin tablet under your tongue. The purpose of this is to dilate the arteries of your heart, which will be seen on the CT scan.
- You will then be asked to hold your breath for 10 to 20 seconds for each set of images. During that time the contrast dye is injected rapidly into your IV. The entire time in the CT scanner is approximately 10 minutes.
- Once the scan is over, the IV will be removed and the test is finished. There are no restrictions on your activities or your diet.
- Please remember to drink plenty of fluids to help flush the contrast from your body.

How will I get the results of the test?

At no time can a technologist or registered nurse discuss results of the test. The test will be interpreted by a cardiologist, who will then send the results to the doctor who ordered the test for you. These results are normally available within five working days. Results will not be available to you the day of the test.

****This test is performed only at Danbury Hospital Medical Arts Center.***

Directions to your appointment

Danbury Hospital Medical Arts Center- Located at 111 Osborne Street, park in any available parking or in the Gold parking garage. Enter the main lobby on the first floor for registration, and testing.

If you have further questions please call (203) 739-4999.

Additional information can also be found at our website: www.danburyhospital.org

Source: Hospital Praxair Regional Heart and Vascular Center

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For more information, or to learn about the specialized services and programs available at Danbury Hospital, please visit www.DanburyHospital.org