

WHAT IS A CT CORONARY ANGIOGRAM (CTCA)?

A CT Coronary Angiogram is probably the best way to detect early signs of coronary atherosclerosis (*the disease which causes heart attacks by forming cholesterol plaques in the walls of the artery*).

Coronary Calcium Score - the heart is scanned during a short breath hold to identify any calcified plaque (*scarring*) in the coronary artery wall.

Coronary CT Angiogram - the heart is scanned after a small injection of X-ray dye to identify any 'soft' plaque (*cholesterol*) in the arteries that have not yet turned into calcium.



At Envision we have Perth's only dual source 64-slice CT scanner. Dual source means we have "double the temporal resolution" or "half the blur", which allows us to get the best possible images. Our scanner protocols are designed to generate clear images at the lowest possible radiation dose.

A CT Coronary Angiogram is a simple, affordable, and stress-free method of assessing your heart risk.

What happens during my CT Coronary Angiogram?

Pre-Procedure

You will be asked to drink plenty of fluids on the day of your scan to ensure you are well hydrated. The time required for your scan is approximately 30mins.

Before the examination you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding your health status, medication and known allergies. You may be asked to change into a gown and to remove jewellery prior to the scan.

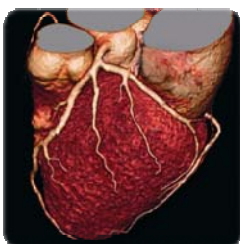
A cannula (*a thin plastic tube, similar to a flexible needle*) will be inserted into a vein in your arm which will later be used to inject X-ray dye during the scan. The X-ray dye (*or contrast*) is a clear, iodine-based dye and is not radioactive.

Procedure

Once comfortable in the CT room, ECG leads will be placed on your chest so we can monitor your heart rate during the scan. In some instances we may need to give you a drug, usually a β -blocker (*beta-blocker*), which slows your heart rate a little to further reduce any blur from cardiac motion.

The examination table slides you into the centre of the CT machine and some preliminary pictures are taken to confirm the scan position. Just before the scan you will receive a spray of GTN (*Glyceryl Trinitrate*) under your tongue. The GTN works to dilate normal arteries. The X-ray contrast will then be injected through the cannula and the scan acquired whilst the dye is passing through your coronary arteries. You may feel flushed during this injection.

What happens after my scan?



At the end of the procedure the cannula will be withdrawn carefully from the vein and a bandaid applied. The dye will be flushed naturally by your body over the following 24 hours without you noticing it. You are free to eat and drink normally; we recommend you continue to drink plenty of fluids to assist your body in flushing the contrast. You will be able to return to your normal daily activities after your scan.

Do not hesitate to contact our office on 6382 3888 if you have any questions or concerns.