

UW Medicine

CT: Abdominal Scan with Intravenous Pyelogram

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains how an abdominal CT scan with intravenous pyelogram works, how to prepare for it, what to expect during the scan, and how to get your results.

Your Appointment

For your procedure, please arrive at UWMC's Radiology department on:

_____, _____ at _____ a.m. / p.m.
DAY DATE TIME

If you enter the hospital through the main entrance, you will be on the 3rd floor. Take the Pacific elevator down to the 2nd floor. Follow the signs to Radiology.

What is an abdominal CT scan with intravenous pyelogram?

A CT (*computed tomography*) scan uses a special X-ray machine to take detailed pictures of the inside of the body. CT scans show many types of tissues and organs in the same image.

A CT scan of the abdomen with *intravenous pyelogram* (IVP) shows organs and tissues such as the urinary tract, liver, spleen, pancreas, kidneys, *gastrointestinal* (digestive) tract, colon, and rectum.

How does it work?

During the scan, you will lie on a table inside the CT machine. The X-ray tube will revolve around you. Many X-ray beams will be passed through your body, creating cross-section images (*slices*) of the area. Your doctor will review these images on a computer screen.

You will receive *contrast* (X-ray dye) through an *intravenous* (IV) tube in your vein. As the contrast moves through your



During your scan, you will lie on a table inside the CT machine.



A CT image of the abdomen

blood vessels and your internal organs, it makes these tissues easier to see in the images.

How do I prepare?

The Day Before

- Drink plenty of clear liquids, such as water, tea or coffee without milk, or juices such as apple, grape, or cranberry.

The Day of Your Scan

- Take your usual medicines prescribed by your doctor.
- It is OK to eat a light meal before your CT exam.
- Wear a comfortable, loose-fitting, 2-piece outfit. Do not wear an underwire bra.

At the Hospital

- Some items can affect the CT images. We may ask you to remove:
 - Any clothing with zippers or snaps
 - Hairpins, jewelry, eyeglasses, hearing aids, and removable dental work
- *Women:* If there is a chance you may be pregnant, please talk with your doctor **before** the scan.

What can I expect?

Before the Scan

- Before starting your CT scan, we will ask you to:
 - Complete a questionnaire
 - Drink 2 cups of water
 - Empty your bladder
- We will place a small *intravenous* (IV) tube into your arm vein. This will be done before you enter the scanning room.
- Before giving you the contrast, the radiologist or technologist will ask if you have:
 - Any allergies, especially to medicines or iodine
 - Diabetes, asthma, or a heart condition
 - Ever had kidney problems or a thyroid condition

If you have had any of these health issues, you may have a higher risk of having an *adverse* (bad) reaction to the contrast. Your kidneys might also have problems flushing the contrast from your body.

- If you have had an allergic reaction to contrast in the past, we will ask you to take medicine to prevent another reaction.
- The CT technologist will help you get into position on the CT table. The technologist will use pillows to help you stay in the correct position during the scan.
- The table will move into the CT scanner. The technologist will then leave the room.

During the Scan

- You will be alone in the room during the scan. The technologist can see, hear, and speak with you through an intercom at all times.
- You must lie still while the table moves into the center of the scanner. You will also need to hold still when the scans are being done. Holding still during the scan results in the best CT pictures.
- You will have a CT scan of your abdomen and pelvis before we give you the contrast.
- After this scan, we will inject contrast into the IV in your arm.
- You will have another scan 10 minutes after the injection.
- Some patients also have a scan 90 seconds after the injection.

What will I feel during the scan?

- CT scanning does not cause any pain. You may feel some discomfort from having to hold still during the scan.
- After you receive the contrast, you may have these normal sensations:
 - A warm, flushed feeling when the contrast is injected
 - A metallic taste in your mouth

These sensations should go away within 1 to 2 minutes.

- If you start to feel light-headed or short of breath, tell us right away. You may be having an allergic reaction to the contrast. A doctor or nurse will be nearby during the scan to help you, if needed.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A radiologist skilled in reading CT scans will review and interpret your CT images. The radiologist will not talk with you about the results. The radiologist will send a detailed report to your provider who referred you for the scan. Your own provider will talk with you about the results of your scan.

You may also read your results on your eCare Results page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call 206.598.6206.

You and your provider will decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.

Urology Clinic Follow-up

For follow-up, please:

- Return to the Urology Clinic right after your scan.
- Return to the Urology Clinic for your follow-up visit on:

_____ at _____ a.m. / p.m.
DAY DATE TIME

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Urology Clinic: 206.598.4294

Radiology/Imaging Services:
206.598.6200