



## IMPORTANT

**Please call us at 403-777-3076 if you need to reschedule.**

## BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

- You will need to have had an electrocardiogram (ECG) within the year prior to your exam. If you haven't, your health care practitioner will need to order one prior to your appointment.
- You will need to have a blood test to determine your kidney function within three months of your appointment.
- Please refrain from taking erectile dysfunction medications (Viagra or Cialis) in the 48 hours prior to the procedure.
- Avoid all caffeine products (e.g., coffee, tea, chocolate, Excedrin, decaf coffee, decaf tea) in the 24 hours before your test.
- If prescribed, please remember to take one tablet (100 mg) of your Beta Blocker the night before your exam. You may be asked to take an additional Beta Blocker one hour before your exam.

## DAY OF YOUR APPOINTMENT

- Take all regular medications (except diabetes medication) the morning of your exam, with water.
- Avoid strenuous exercise the morning of your exam.
- No food or drink (except water) in the four hours before your exam. If you have diabetes, you can have dry toast and juice.
- Please arrive 60 minutes before your appointment to allow enough time for adequate preparation.
- Bring photo identification and your provincial health card.
- Wear comfortable clothes.
- Please do not bring children who require supervision.

## YOUR EXAM

*DURATION: Exam: 15-20 minutes Appt: 1-2 hours*

A coronary computed tomography (CT) angiography is a simple, non-invasive method of examining the coronary vessels that supply blood to your heart. This exam is quick and painless with very specific results. Plus, coronary CT angiography requires very little preparation and no recovery time compared to traditional angiography.

Coronary CT angiography can discover signs of early or significant heart disease that would be undetectable on other heart imaging tests. It detects both calcified, or hard, plaque and noncalcified, or soft, plaque. It is these soft plaque deposits, often invisible to standard imaging tools, that are more likely to break away and cause heart attacks or more significant health issues.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING MY EXAM?

- You may be asked to change into scrubs.
- A nurse will take your blood pressure and note your heart rate. If your heart rate is too high to obtain clear pictures of your coronary arteries, you will be given another Beta Blocker. It may take a few minutes for the Beta Blocker to lower your heart rate; during this time the nurse will start an intravenous (IV) line for the CT contrast solution and you will be able to relax in a quiet room.
- In the scanning room, one of our technologists will position you comfortably on the scanner table and attach heart-rate monitor leads to your chest and arms to identify the precise moment for imaging – the fraction of a second between heartbeats.
- Your technologist will leave the room to begin your exam, but you will be in direct communication throughout your procedure.

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**Your exam has four parts:**

- 1.** Your technologist will take test images to ensure you are in the best position for the scan. We use an automatic injector that delivers contrast solution to your IV to coincide precisely with the scans.
- 2.** Your calcium score is taken as you are advanced into the scanner and the machine spins around your body. It measures the amount of calcium deposits surrounding your coronary arteries and provides information on your vessel locations.
- 3.** Prior to the test bolus scan, the nurse or your technologist will spray a little nitroglycerin under your tongue. This dilates the coronary arteries and helps produce clearer images. (You may experience a metallic taste and a warming sensation throughout your body, this is normal.) You will then be moved into the scanner where the machine will take another series of images as the contrast solution is added to your IV. These images will measure how long it takes for the solution to reach your heart vessels and gauge your exact cardiac output.

- 4.** The last step is the angiogram. You will be advanced into the machine for a final time and a large amount of contrast solution will be added to your IV as the scan begins.

At different times throughout your exam, the technologist will ask you to hold your breath for approximately 10-15 seconds while we scan your coronary arteries.

**POST-EXAM INSTRUCTIONS**

After your scan, we will remove your IV and a nurse will check your blood pressure and heart rate. Once these have returned to normal, you'll be free to go.

**WHEN WILL I GET MY RESULTS?**

We do our best to have our radiologists interpret the information and forward the results to your doctor in a timely manner.