



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Computed Tomography (CT) Scan

A computed tomography (CT) scan is a type of imaging that takes pictures of your child's body. It can be used to study all parts of the body, including arms and legs, organs, blood vessels and bones. CT scans are fast, painless, noninvasive and accurate. With each rotation of the machine, a thin image of your child is created. These images are like slices of bread. They can be rearranged to view the area at different angles and even make 3-D images.

Before the test

- **Be sure to tell the technologist if there is a chance you or your child may be pregnant.**
- Talk about the scan with your child before it happens so they will know what the technologist will be doing. The technologist will also explain everything before the test. Feel free to ask questions before, during and after the scan.
- If you are not pregnant and do not have other children with you, you are welcome to stay with your child during the entire exam.
- Some exams require oral contrast. This is a liquid your child drinks that allows for the picture to show the abdomen and pelvis better. If you were asked to arrive 2 hours and 15 minutes early, your child is scheduled to drink oral contrast. Oral contrast is usually mixed with Crystal Lite® and tastes as such.
- Instead of drinking, your child may get the **contrast** in their vein through a small needle (or IV). Your child will feel a little poke at first, but it will last only a few seconds.

APPOINTMENT:

Date: _____

Procedure Time: _____

Please report to **Imaging Dept. Registration Desk**, across from the Magic Forest, first floor of the new Hospital building of Nationwide Children's Hospital.

A parent or legal guardian must be present at registration unless your child is 18 years old or older.

☐ Please arrive 15 minutes before the procedure time to allow time to register.

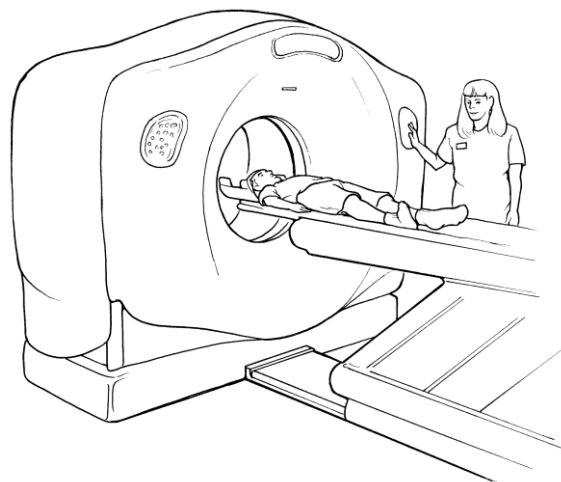
☐ Please arrive 2 hours and 15 minutes before the procedure time to allow for registration and oral contrast.

If you need to cancel your appointment or reschedule, call (614) 722-2000.

- The **contrast medium** circulates in the blood and makes parts of the child's body show up clearly on the X-rays.

How the test is done

- For the test, your child will be placed on a padded table. Straps, like seat belts in a car, will be placed across their body and fastened to the table. This is to keep your child from moving or falling.
- If your child is having a head or neck CT scan, anything on the head (such as metal hair clips, a hat, glasses or a wig) will be removed. A strap will be placed across the forehead and soft pads will be placed beside the ears to help hold their head still.
- **If your child is having a chest, abdomen or pelvis CT scan, their arms will be placed above their head so they are not in the picture. You may need to hold your child's hands during the scan.**
- **The technologist will move the table so that the area to be scanned is just inside the opening of the CT machine (Picture 1).** The technologist will go into another room to start the CT machine.
- The technologist will stay in the other room to run the machine. They will be able to see your child through the window and talk to them through an intercom system. Your child will hear a buzzing sound when the CT machine starts. The CT machine moves around the part of the body being scanned and makes a whirling sound. As it moves, X-ray beams are sent out and detectors pick up these beams. They are measured and collected in the memory of the computer. The computer makes a picture of the section of the body.
- Your child must stay still while the images are taken. The technologist will watch the monitor to make sure the pictures are being taken correctly.
- After the exam, the technologist will give you specific home instructions for your child.



Picture 1 Having a CT scan.

Follow-up

A report of the CT scan will be sent to your child's health care provider within 48 hours after the test. They will explain the test results and any plan for medical care. If you have any questions, be sure to ask your child's health care provider or call the Nationwide Children's Hospital Imaging Department at (614) 722-2645.