

This instruction is intended for our patients who are in a care relationship

The Wellbeing Services County of South West Finland

Turku University Hospital

TT Computed tomography of the coronary arteries (Radiology)

The computed tomography (CT) scanner performs cross-sectional or 'slice' imaging, in which the image is formed with the help of X-rays. For this reason, the study is not suitable for pregnant women.

The total duration of the procedure visit, including preparation, is approximately 1.5 hours.

How to prepare for the procedure?

Please do not drink coffee, tea, cola or energy drinks on the day of the examination as they can increase your heart rate.

Please remove jewellery and piercings from the area to be examined before the procedure.

If your doctor thinks it is necessary to check your kidney function before the procedure, the doctor will order a blood test. Metformin-medication does not need to be stopped before the procedure.

If you are, or think you may be, pregnant or if you are allergic to X-ray contrast agent, please tell this to the referring doctor and please contact the X-ray department before the day of the examination. If you have previously had a mild reaction to iodine contrast agent, a contrast examination can often be done with pre-administered cortisone medication.

How is the procedure done?

Before the procedure, you will receive a questionnaire to fill out. The imaging procedure is explained beforehand and you will practice the special breath holding required during the scan with help from a nurse. You will have an ECG monitor and a cannula (drip) in your forearm vein.

The Doctor performing the procedure will, if necessary, give you a Beta-blocker to reduce your heart rate. Just before the scan, a nitro spray that dilates the coronary arteries is also given.

The heart is imaged first without contrast injection and then with contrast injection. The X-ray contrast agent contains iodine and it can cause a brief warming sensation throughout the body, in addition to a metallic taste in the mouth.

A successful scan requires you to stay still and follow the instructions given to you. The Radiographer and the examining doctor will be able to see and hear you throughout the examination.

What about after the procedure?

Your Cardiologist will discuss the results of the examination and follow-up with you during the same hospital visit.

The procedure does not require further visits to the hospital. Drinking plenty of water is recommended after the study, because the X-ray contrast agent is excreted by the kidneys into the bladder and passed in the urine. Iodine contrast agents are excreted to a small extent in breast milk, but their absorption from the gastrointestinal tract is very low, so a breastfeeding break is not necessary.

In general, contrast agents do not have side effects. However, if you notice anything unusual about your health after the examination, please contact the examination department or on-call doctor.