

# *Radiology Associates of Ithaca*

"YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD RADIOLOGISTS PRACTICING WORLD CLASS IMAGING"  
101 Dates Drive, Ithaca, New York 14850

## **Computerized Axial Tomography (CAT) Scan**

**What is the test?** CAT utilizes X-ray and a state-of-the-art computer to create specific images of the body's muscles, bones, and organs. These images are highly detailed cross sections of the tissue being examined.

**How do I prepare?** Please plan to arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled exam. For an abdominal scan, please arrive one hour before the exam to allow time for you to take the orange-flavored drink containing contrast. If your abdomen is being examined, consume only clear liquids (water, coffee, tea, soft drinks, clear fruit juices, bouillon, and gelatin) after 8:00 p.m. on the evening before your CAT scan. For a head or chest CAT scan, don't eat or drink for four hours ahead of time unless you are told differently. If you are on Glucophage (metformin), please consult your doctor regarding stopping and then resuming your medication following the exam. Since materials such as metal and plastic can affect the accuracy of X-rays, it's best to leave your jewelry at home.

**What can I expect during the procedure?** CAT scans are safe and painless. They take anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour, depending on the number of studies ordered. You simply lie on a table that slides into the scanner. The scanner is shaped like a donut and makes clinking sounds as it moves around your body. For some studies, the radiologist or radiology nurse will inject an iodine-based contrast into a vein. Alternatively, you may be asked to swallow an orange-flavored drink containing contrast, in order to highlight your digestive tract. You may be asked to hold your breath for a short period of time. During the scan, you can see and talk with the technologists who are standing just behind a transparent screen.

**After the test?** If you have had contrast administered, you may feel slightly nauseous or notice an unusual taste in your mouth. We recommend that you drink plenty of caffeine-free fluids. Unless otherwise notified, you may return to your regular diet and resume normal activities.

**How and when will I get my test results?** Typically, within 48 hours a written report of your test results will be sent to your referring physician, who will review them with you. Additional time (3 to 5 days) may be required if we are comparing these test results to previous findings from another hospital or health-care provider.

**Where is this test performed?** CAT Scanning is available at all three Imaging Services centers: Cayuga Medical Center at 101 Dates Drive, off NYS Route 96 in Ithaca; Convenient Care Center in Ithaca, Warren Road at Arrowwood Drive; and Convenient Care and Commons Imaging Center in Cortland, Route 281 at Commons Avenue.

Special instructions about specific tests

Abdominal Renal Stone (without contrast)

Brain CAT (without contrast)

Chest CAT (without contrast)

Preparation:

These CAT scans do not require a contrast.

There is no prep for these exams.

The total testing time is about 20 minutes:

Abdomen or Pelvis

Three-phase Kidney

Adrenal

Preparation:

Plan to arrive 15 minutes early for registration. These CAT scans require that you drink a contrast and have an IV to highlight the area being examined. You will wait 1 hour from the time you drink your oral contrast to the time you are scanned. The prep for these exams (Abdomen, Pelvis, Three-phase Kidney, and Adrenal) is similar.

Nothing to eat 4 hours before the exam.

You may have up to 16 ounces of clear liquids: water, tea, juice, or broth, but no coffee.

When you arrive for your imaging study, you will consume 32 ounces of contrast beverage within 60 minutes.

You will have an IV started prior to the procedure.

When having the Adrenal CAT scan, you will have the examination without contrast first. This may be followed by a second scan with IV contrast, if the radiologist determines this is necessary. Testing time is about 90 minutes.

Brain CAT (with IV contrast)

Testing time is about 30 minutes.

Chest CAT (with IV contrast)

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

Neck CAT Soft Tissue (with IV contrast)

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

Renal CAT (first without contrast, possibly followed with contrast)

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

CAT Angiography – Brain ( CTA-Brain )

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

CAT Angiography – Leg (CTA- Pelvic w/leg runoff )

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

CAT Angiography – Neck (CTA -Neck )

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

CAT Angiography – Abd (CTA-Abd )

Testing time is about 40 minutes.

Preparation:

Have nothing to eat for four hours before the exam.

You may have up to 16 ounces of clear liquid liquids: water, tea, juice, or broth, but no coffee.

Please plan to arrive 15 minutes early for registration.

The exams require an IV. No oral contrast will be given.