

Having a computerized tomography (CT) scan



Your child's CT scan is scheduled for (date) _____ at (time) _____ in the Imaging (Radiology) Department on the first floor of Children's Wisconsin Hospital.

Please stop at a Welcome desk to get a badge and directions to Imaging. There is free valet parking at the main entrance of the hospital.

What is a CT scan?

The CT scanner uses x-rays and a computer to look inside your child's body. The scans show pictures of different organs such as the brain, kidneys or liver. Visit childrenswi.org/imaging for more information about our Imaging Department.

Special preparation

Do **not** let your child eat or drink anything before the CT scan. Use the guide below if your child is **having sedation** for their CT scan:

- No solid food 8 hours before the scan
- No milk or formula for 6 hours before the scan
- No breast milk for 4 hours before the scan
- No clear liquids for 2 hours before the scan



Important information

- **It is important that you follow these special instructions.** If your child eats or drinks anything after the times listed above, **the scan may be cancelled.**
- It is important for your child to lie very still for the CT scan. If your child does not feel well, it may be hard to lie still. If your child is sick on the day of the appointment, call the CT Department. Your child's appointment can be changed to another day.
- If your child is having a CT scan of their abdomen and pelvis, plan to arrive **2 to 3 hours** before the appointment time. You will receive specific instructions on what time to arrive by a nurse that will call you a few days prior to the appointment. This will give you time to register and to ask questions. The CT nurse and technologist will talk with you about the test. Please be sure to ask any questions you have.
- If your child is having more than one test that day, let the CT tech know. If your child is having a CT scan of their abdomen, your child should not have any barium studies done 7 days before the appointment.

How the scan is done

- Depending on the type of CT scan your child may need to have contrast. It helps the doctor see inside your child's body. Contrast is given by having your child drink it, or it may be given by IV. Sometimes it is given both ways. The oral contrast can be mixed with juice, soda, or Gatorade.

- When it is time for the scan, your child will be brought in to the CT room. Your child will lie down on a table. Pillows may be used to make your child feel comfortable and keep them in the right position.
- Sometimes a child may not be able to lie still enough for the scan to be done. If it is hard for your child to hold still, medicine may be given to make them sleepy. An anesthesiologist will give this medicine if needed.
- Once your child is comfortable, the technologist will slide the table into the middle of the scanner. The scanner looks like a big donut. The technologist and nurse will be able to see your child with a TV camera. They will talk to your child on a microphone. It is very important that your child lies very still during the scan.

After the scan

If your child was given medicine to make them sleepy, you can go home when your child is awake. Your child may feel sleepy for a few hours after the scan. Your child should stay home and rest for the day. Your child should not go to school or to daycare. Your child may do quiet things like read a book or watch TV. Do not let your child ride a bike or climb anything. The nurse or doctor will tell your family how to care for your child at home.

Results

Your ordering doctor will get the results of the test within three days. The doctor will share the results with you and your family.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.