Coronary Artery 
CT Scan

About coronary artery CT scans
A coronary artery CT (computed tomography) scan is an x-ray scan using a special x-ray machine and computer. This scan creates pictures of thin slices or segments of the body. The scan is used to see the heart’s arteries and veins. It can show pictures of how blood flows through the heart’s arteries and where the blood flow may be slowed or blocked.

Preparing for the CT scan
• If you take Viagra, Cialis, Levitra or Revatio, talk to your doctor about using the drug before your scan. Most often, you need to stop using this drug for 24 hours before your scan because of the medicine you will get during the scan.
• If you have been diagnosed with kidney failure, please tell the doctor ordering the scan. You may be given more instructions to prepare for your scan.
• We need to know how well your kidneys work. This is done through blood work that needs to be done within the past 30 days before the scan.
• If you have diabetes, talk to your doctor about any medicines you take and whether those medicines need changed before your CT scan.
• You may take your normal medicines with a small sip of water. Stop or adjust any medicines that your doctor told you to.
• Avoid caffeine, and do not smoke for at least 12 hours before your scan.
• Do not eat or drink for 3 hours before your scan.

Have questions about radiation?
At The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, we work hard to make sure you receive the lowest dose of radiation possible for your test. The radiation doses for our tests are lower than national averages and some of the lowest in the area. The dose you receive will be on the report from the radiologist.

Pregnant or allergic to contrast?
Tell the radiology technologist if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant.
Tell the radiology technologist if you have an allergy to contrast medicines.

Need to reschedule or have other questions?
If you are not able to keep your appointment, call radiology scheduling at 614-293-4333. Please call us with any other questions you have.
Day of your appointment

- **Arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time.**
- Please bring a list of your medicines to your appointment. Include prescription and over-the-counter medicines, herbal products, and vitamins.
- Bring your photo ID and insurance card with you.
- After you arrive, a registered technologist will review your medical and surgical history with you.
- An intravenous (IV) line will be started in your arm for a medicine called contrast. This is a dye that helps get better pictures of your heart. If you have ever had a reaction to any type of contrast, please tell the technologist.

During your scan

- Leads will be placed to monitor your heart rate. These look like small wires that are placed on the outside of your skin with a type of tape.
- We will check your heart rate and blood pressure often during the scan. If your heart rate is above 65 beats a minute, we will give you a medicine to lower your heart rate safely below 65. CT pictures are best when the heart rate is below 65.
- The technologist or nurse will help you into the correct position on the scan table.
- You will be asked to hold your breath and stay still while pictures are taken.
- The contrast medicine will be given through your IV. You will feel a warm feeling in your chest and body when this is given to you. This feeling is normal and goes away after a few seconds. Please tell the technologist if you have any other unusual sensations or feelings.
- **Be prepared to be in the Radiology Department for 1 hour for your scan.**

After your scan

- If you have no other tests scheduled, you will be able to go back to your normal diet and activities. No special care in needed.
- Drink 8 (8-ounce) cups of liquid, such as water, apple juice, or Sprite to flush the contrast medicine out of your body. Limit the amount of caffeine you drink.
- The radiologist, a doctor who specializes in radiology, or the cardiologist will study your images very carefully and send a final report to your doctor.
- **If you have any problems or questions after your scan, call your doctor.**

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Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.

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