

CT Head

What is a Head CT?

CT scanning often referred to as a CAT scan, is a diagnostic noninvasive imaging test that is used to create detailed images of internal organs, bones, soft tissues, and blood vessels. CT of the head is most appropriate for the evaluation of the acute abnormalities or if a patient cannot have an MRI. MRI is generally recommended for most outpatient indications.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

70450/IMG 181	without contrast (most common)
70460/IMG 182	with contrast
70470/IMG 183	without and with contrast (rarely indicated)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

without contrast:	TIA or stroke symptoms, altered mental status, trauma, seizure, acute headache
with contrast:	tumor or infection and patient unable to undergo MRI, abnormal non-contrast CT

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR <30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Without contrast studies: No preparation required.

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

Additionally, the patient must be NPO for 2 hours prior to the exam.

Your patient should also inform his/her doctor of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions, and if he/she has a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse event.



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What Happens During the Test?

Your patient will be asked to remove any jewelry and the technologist will obtain a medical history. The patient will lie on his/her back during the exam. If contrast is indicated, the technologist will start an IV. The patient may feel warm and flushed for a few seconds. The patient will be asked to remain very still during the scanning process.

The scan should take approximately 30 minutes.

The Results

A radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to the referring physician within 1 business day.

(Information adapted from radiologyinfo.org and Ryan Holdsworth, MD)

This manual is intended for use as merely a guideline for referring physicians and their staff only. It contains information pertaining to the most commonly ordered exams and indications. However, Iowa Radiology does not recommend any particular examination. Individual radiologist preference or patient circumstances may dictate ordering alternative studies.



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CTA Brain, CTA Neck and CTA Carotids (CT Angiogram)

What is a CTA Carotids?

CT angiography is used to examine the blood vessels in the neck and head. Angiography can be performed using CT or MRI. Routine protocol is to perform a CTA of the brain in conjunction with the neck.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

70498/IMG 199 CTA Neck

70496/IMG 786 CTA Brain

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

with contrast: headache, neck pain, vertigo, syncope, aneurysm, stenosis, TIA or stroke symptoms, abnormal carotid ultrasound or MRA

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR < 30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

Additionally, the patient must be NPO for 2 hours prior to the exam.

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CT Orbits

What is an Orbit CT?

Computed Tomography (CT) scanning is a noninvasive diagnostic imaging test used to create detailed images of internal organs, bones, soft tissues, and blood vessels. CT of the orbits is most appropriate acute for indications such as infection or trauma. MRI is generally recommended for most other indications.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

70480/IMG 1237 without contrast

70481/IMG 1238 with contrast

70482/IMG 1240 without and with contrast (rarely indicated)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

without contrast: trauma/injury

with contrast: infection/cellulitis (If patient cannot have an MRI:
orbital mass/tumor, proptosis, Graves' disease)

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR <30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Without contrast studies: No preparation required.

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

Additionally, the patient must be NPO for 2 hours prior to the exam.

Your patient should also inform his/her doctor of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions, and if he/she has a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse event.



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CT Temporal Bone

What is a Temporal Bone CT?

Computed Tomography (CT) scanning is a noninvasive diagnostic imaging test used to create detailed images of internal organs, bones, soft tissues, and blood vessels. Temporal bone CT creates high resolution images of the structures of the bony structures of the temporal bone/middle ear.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

70480/IMG 1237 without contrast (most common)
70481/IMG 1238 with contrast
70482/IMG 1240 without and with contrast (rarely indicated)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

without contrast: injury, mastoiditis, hearing loss, cholesteatoma, pain
with contrast: tumor/mass, soft tissue infection

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR < 30 for all contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Without contrast studies: No preparation required.

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

Additionally, the patient must be NPO for 2 hours prior to the exam.

Your patient should also inform his/her doctor of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions, and if he/she has a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse event.



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CT Sinus/Facial Bones (maxillofacial)

What is a Sinus/Facial Bones CT?

Computed Tomography (CT) scanning is a noninvasive diagnostic imaging test used to create detailed images of internal organs, bones soft tissues and blood vessels.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

70486/IMG 1242 without contrast (most common)
70487/IMG 1247 with contrast
70488/IMG 1249 without and with contrast (rarely ordered)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

without contrast: chronic sinusitis, trauma/injury
with contrast: infection/cellulitis

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR <30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Without contrast studies: No preparation required.

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

Additionally, the patient must be NPO for 2 hours prior to the exam.

Your patient should also inform his/her doctor of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions, and if he/she has a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse event.



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The scan should take approximately 30 minutes.

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CT Neck (soft tissue)

What is Neck CT?

Computed Tomography (CT) scanning is a noninvasive diagnostic imaging test used to create detailed images of internal organs, bones, soft tissues, and blood vessels. Soft tissue structures of the neck include salivary glands, pharynx, larynx, thyroid, lymph nodes, and others.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

70491/IMG 192	with contrast (most common)
70490/IMG 191	without contrast
70492/IMG 193	without and with contrast (rarely indicated)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

with contrast:	tumor/mass, adenopathy, infection
without contrast:	only if patient cannot have contrast

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR <30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Without contrast studies: No preparation required.

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

Additionally, the patient must be NPO for 2 hours prior to the exam.

Your patient should also inform his/her doctor of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions, and if he/she has a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse event.



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The scan should take approximately 30 minutes.

The Results

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CT Spine

What is a Spine CT?

CT of the spine is used to help diagnose spinal column damage in injured patients. Most CT spines are done because the patient cannot have an MRI.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

72125/IMG 207	CT C-spine without contrast (most common)
72126/IMG 208	CT C-spine with contrast (rare)
72127/IMG 209	CT C-spine with and without contrast (only when recommended by radiologist)
72128/IMG 210	CT T-spine without contrast (most common)
72129/IMG 211	CT T-spine with contrast (rare)
72130/IMG 212	CT T-spine with and without contrast (only when recommended by radiologist)
72131/IMG 213	CT L-spine without contrast (most common)
72132/IMG 214	CT L-spine with contrast (rare)
72133/IMG 215	CT L-spine with and without contrast (only when recommended by radiologist)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

without contrast: pain, trauma, fall, fractures, pars defect, sciatica

with contrast: mass of spine or infection

***If physician wants intrathecal contrast, that is a CT myelogram and is only performed at Methodist Hospital**

Tricare: Diagnostic Imaging for Acute Lower Back Pain

TRICARE will not cover diagnostic imaging for patients with acute lower back pain (LBP) within six weeks of symptom onset if there were no warning signs. Diagnostic imaging includes: x-rays, ultrasounds, CT scans and MRIs.

TRICARE will cover diagnostic imaging for low back pain (LBP) with the following warning signs:

- A possible fracture, history of osteoporosis, or chronic steroid use.



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- A possible tumor, cancer, or infection.
- Possible cauda equina syndrome.
- A major motor weakness.
- Progressive neurological symptoms.

Last updated: 10/30/2020

<https://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/IsItCovered/DiagnosticImagingLBP>

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR < 30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Without contrast studies: No preparation required.

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What Happens During the Test?

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The scan should take approximately 30 minutes.

The Results

A radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to the referring physician within 1 business day.

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CT Chest

What is a Chest CT?

A CT of the chest can be used to help diagnose clinical signs or symptoms of disease of the chest including tumors in the lung, lung nodules, and mediastinum or tumors that have spread from other parts of the body.

CPT Codes/IMG Codes

71260/IMG 202	with contrast (most common)
71250/IMG 200	without contrast
71270/IMG 203	without and with contrast (rare)

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

with contrast:	cough, follow-up or staging lung cancer, pneumonia, follow-up mediastinal or hilar lung module
without contrast:	interstitial lung disease, bronchiectasis
Lung nodule:	Protocol is dependent on size of nodule and patient characteristics.

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR <30 for contrast exams

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CTA Chest (CT Angiogram)

What is a Chest CTA?

CT angiography is used to examine the blood vessels of the chest. Please specify what vessels to best evaluate.

CPT Code/IMG Code

71275/IMG 206 without and with contrast

Please include copies of both front and back of the patient's insurance cards on all ordered exams.

Indications

without and with contrast: evaluate for pulmonary emboli, aneurysm, dissection, or coarctation

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to contrast material, GFR < 30 for contrast exams

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

With contrast studies: A current creatinine within 30 days is required if the patient is 60 years of age or older, has diabetes, hypertension, or renal insufficiency.

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The scan should take approximately 30 minutes.



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