



CHILDREN'S
HEALTH SYSTEM®

Computed Tomography Examination

1600 7th Ave. S. • Birmingham, AL • 35233 • (205) 939-9377 • CHECK Center Health Information

Your child's doctor has requested a computed tomographic (CT) scan of the head or portion of the body. This special test involves having your child lie on a table while a special x-ray machine in the shape of a circle takes pictures of your child. These x-rays are actually pictures of what the inside of your child's head or body looks like. Your child will not feel the x-rays as the pictures are taken, and the circular space will not get any smaller during the test.

Before or during the CT scan, **some** children will need a shot (injection) in their vein to administer a special type of dye (contrast) that will allow certain areas to be better seen on the x-ray pictures. The incidence of complications from the dye injection is quite low. A warm flushed feeling throughout the body accompanied by thirst and/or a funny taste in the mouth is relatively common. Your child may get nauseated and vomit. However, if these problems do occur, they will last only a few minutes and will not require specific treatment. On occasion, some individuals have developed itching of the skin or "hives." If this occurs, appropriate treatment will be prescribed by the radiologist in charge. On very rare occasions, more serious respiratory or cardiovascular complications have developed following injection. Our radiologists, along with other Hospital physicians, are equipped to handle these complications. Having the examination done in a hospital with all of the various services immediately available is a very important protection for your child. In the opinion of your physician, the diagnostic information to be obtained from this study significantly outweighs the potential complications of this procedure. Some individuals who have allergies or asthma may require appropriate preparations prior to their examination or a different dye (contrast). If your child suffers from any allergies or asthma, please make that known to the technologist or radiologist in charge before the start of the procedure.

You will be instructed to have your child not eat or drink anything for a certain period of time prior to the examination. The time will depend on the age of your child and on the time of your appointment. Food and liquid are withheld to lessen the chance of your child vomiting in the event that intravenous dye is given and also to lessen the chance that your child might vomit and possibly choke if he/she has to be sedated for the examination.

When parts of the abdomen or pelvis are being examined, your child also may be given a special liquid dye (contrast) to drink prior to the examination.

Because your child must be completely motionless for the examination, he/she will be evaluated prior to the scan to determine if sedation will be required. If this is needed, it usually will be given in the form of a small amount of liquid medication to swallow or sometimes in the form of an injection. Your child will then be monitored quite closely by the x-ray technologist and doctor while he/she is in the CT scan area. You will have to remain with your child in x-ray until he/she awakens. This observation period may last a few hours. You will then be given an instruction sheet before leaving the x-ray department.

(continued on back)

Children are the center of our lives.

COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY EXAMINATION (continued)

When you arrive at the Hospital, please stop at the referral registration desk on the second floor in order to properly register. You will then be directed to the Pediatric Imaging (radiology) Department.

If you have any questions or a reason to cancel this appointment, please call 939-9724.

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