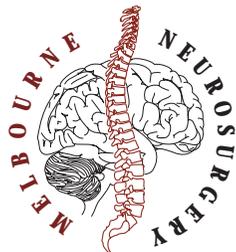


PROCEDURE INFORMATION

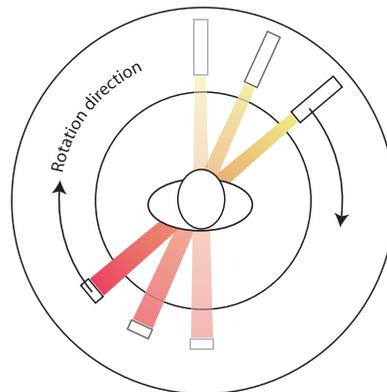
CAT SCAN

COMPUTERISED AXIAL TOMOGRAPHY



WHAT IS COMPUTERISED AXIAL TOMOGRAPHY?

This is where lots of images taken in a circular fashion around the body are collated and adjusted by a computer to produce cross sectional pictures. The Cat scan uses radiation to get the information for the computer. The picture quality may vary from machine to machine. These days different types of images can also be generated rather than just the cross sectional views.



WHY ARE YOU HAVING A CAT SCAN ?

There is more information needed by your doctor than can be determined by normal plain Xrays or other imaging. This information is needed to help make a diagnosis of your condition or to aid in planning for surgery.

WHO CAN ORDER A CAT SCAN ?

Any doctor can order a CAT scan. Some chiropractors and other health professionals will also order the pictures.



STANDARD CAT SCAN MACHINE

WHAT IS IT USED FOR ?

Most parts of the body can be imaged with a CT scan. Blood vessels can be looked at for abnormalities. It can be used to screen for certain conditions. It can be used to add further information needed to make surgery safe.

It may be used to image

Spine /spinal cord

It may show a disc prolapse.
It may show an abnormality in the bones of the back or neck.
It shows the quality of your discs.
It will show degenerative changes in you spine.

The brain

It reduces the need to get an angiogram to look at the cerebral vessels when looking for abnormalities.
It can diagnose tumours or bleeds in the brain.
It may show if you have had a stroke in the past.

Other parts of the body.

In nneurosurgery we may need to look insid ethe belly or chest and this can be seen with a CAT scan.

WHAT HAPPENS ?

You should turn up for your appointment at least 15 minutes early to allow for getting changed and so that some checks can be made.

You can eat and drink before some types of CAT scan so it is important to ask prior to your appointment..

The scan will take anything between 15 to 20 minutes depending on if you need any contrast.

You will get into a gown and go into the scan room which is shielded to radiation . If it is a spinal or brain scan you will normally lie on your back. With the brain scan your head may be positioned into a special holder.

A special type of conveyer moves the table you lie on into the donut of the machine. It is quite open. The donut may tilt to angle the scan to the direction needed to take the pictures. They will take a preliminary scan before the important pictures.

The images are no good if you move so it is very important to keep still.

You can be heard while in the machine even though there is no-one in the room. They will give instructions from time to time.

There is a lot of humming while the machine works (this is normal).

If you need contrast you will be brought out of the machine and this is injected into a vein and you go back in.

When it is finished you can go home. The pictures and report are usually sent to the doctor who referred you, but sometimes you will be requested to pick them up.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO TELL THE DOCTOR BEFORE HAVING A CAT SCAN. ?

Pregnancy

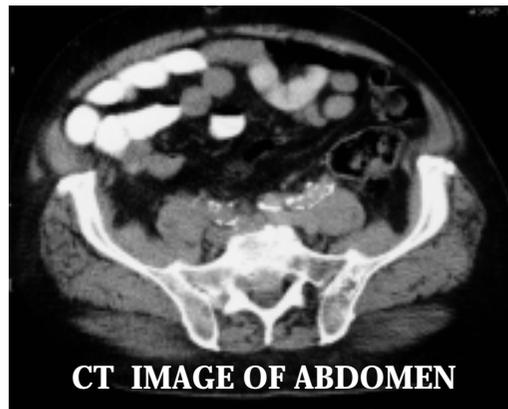
The main reason you cannot have a CAT scan is if you are pregnant. If there is any chance of this you need to let the doctor and radiology staff know.

Contrast

This is an iodine based contrast. If you are allergic to Xray contrast you need to let us know because it cannot be given. Contrast is not always needed.

Claustrophobia

This is the fear of enclosed places. If this is a problem then tell us before we book the scan. This very unlikely to be a problem in the ct scan machine unlike the MRI machine which is quite enclosed.

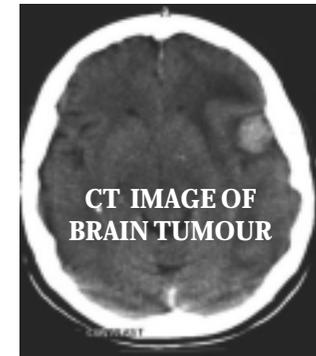


How much and who Pays the bill

This depends not only on where you are having the CAT scan

If it is a workcover or TAC problem then they usually pay the bill. You will need to take these details with you otherwise you may have to pay at the time.

There is usually some out of pocket expense and it depends on where the scan is done as to how much this is.



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