

Computerized Tomography (CT) Scan with Anesthesia

What is a CT scan?

A CT is a scan that takes many detailed pictures of the inside of the body.

What is anesthesia?

Anesthesia is a medicine used for sleep, pain, and to stop your child from moving during the CT scan. Anesthesia is more than just being asleep. It also includes the care before, during, and after the procedure.

How do I prepare for a CT?

- A nurse will call and give you directions about when your child can eat and drink before the CT.
- Children are not allowed in the waiting room without an adult. If you will be in the CT room with your child, please bring another adult with you to watch your other children.

What is contrast?

- Contrast is a dye (or liquid) that is used to highlight specific areas in the body more clearly in your child's CT scan.
- If your child needs contrast for the CT scan, before the scan:
 - An intravenous line (IV) will be placed and/or
 - Your child will be given apple juice, clear soda or Powerade® mixed with contrast. Your child will be asked to drink it slowly.

What if my child needs an IV for anesthesia or contrast?

- Your child will have an intravenous line (IV) placed for anesthesia and contrast, if needed. An intravenous line (IV) is a soft, flexible tube placed inside a vein. IV lines are used to give your child medicine or fluids.
 - The nurse will look for a good vein (usually on the hands or arms) to place the IV.
 - They will clean the skin and spray a special cold spray on it to help with pain.
 - Then, the nurse will use a needle to place a small tube into your child's vein.
 - Once the IV is in place, the needle will be taken out, leaving only a small, soft tube in your child.
 - The nurses will put special water in the IV to make sure it's in the right place.
 - The IV will be taped to help it stay in place and to keep your child from moving it.
- If your child needs IV contrast, a small machine will be connected to the IV to give the contrast. The contrast does not hurt when going into the IV, but it may feel warm.



What will happen during the CT?

A staff member will bring you and your child to the holding room. A nurse practitioner will ask you questions about your child's and family's medical history. Your child will be weighed and have temperature, blood pressure and their oxygen level checked.

- Your child will need to change into a hospital gown.
- When it is time, a staff member will move you and your child to the nursing area and be asked additional questions.
- A staff member will bring your child into the CT room. One adult family member will be able to stay with your child until he or she is given the anesthesia and falls asleep.
- Staff will help your child onto the procedure bed and place monitors and a blood pressure cuff on your child.
- The anesthesiologist connects a tube to your child's IV to give the anesthesia. This way, we can be sure your child is very still so we can get clear pictures.

What happens after my child receives anesthesia?

- The medicine may make your child feel uncomfortable as it is going in through the IV.
- Your child will fall asleep very fast once the medicine has been given.
- Once your child is asleep, you will need to wait in the waiting room. When the scan is done, your child will be moved to the recovery area. This is where children wake up after having anesthesia. You will be able to be with your child as they wake up.
- Once your child is awake, the nurse will remove the IV and give you instructions to follow after the scan.
- Then you will be discharged home or the Transport Team will take you back to your inpatient room.

How can I help my child?

Explain to your child what will happen during the CT. Use simple words that are familiar to you and your child.

- Be honest with your child about the CT.
- Bring comforting things that your child enjoys from home, such as a favorite toy, blanket, book, etc.
- Praise and support your child and acknowledge his or her feelings.)
- Ask questions. Make sure you have all the information you need to be prepared and to best support your child.

Glossary

Anesthesia: medicine used for sleep, pain and to stop your child from moving during a scan, surgery, or procedure.

Anesthesiologist: a doctor who gives anesthesia.

Contrast: a liquid used to better see pictures of the inside of the body.

Intravenous line (IV): An intravenous line (IV) is a soft, flexible tube placed inside a vein. IV lines are used to give your child medicine or fluids.

If you would like a Child Life Specialist to talk to your child about the scan or give support, call 323-361-7675.

Radiology

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