Common Myths About CT Scans at Butler Medical Imaging. (08) 9544 3999



CT (computed tomography) scans have become an indispensable tool in modern medicine, allowing specialists to diagnose a wide range of medical conditions, from tumors and internal injuries to heart disease. By using X-rays to produce detailed cross-sectional images of the body, CT scans offer insights that can lead to more accurate diagnoses and better treatment plans. However, despite their widespread use, many patients remain hesitant to undergo CT scans due to persistent myths surrounding their safety and [effectiveness](https://butlerimaging.com.au/ct-scan/).

This article will address some of the most common myths about CT scans and separate fact from fiction.

**Myth 1: CT Scans Cause Hair Loss and Skin Redness**

One of the most pervasive myths about CT scans is that they can cause hair loss and skin redness due to radiation exposure. While it is true that CT scans expose patients to a certain level of ionizing radiation, the amount of exposure is carefully controlled and monitored to ensure patient safety.

The rare cases of hair loss and skin redness linked to CT scans occurred when patients were exposed to radiation levels far exceeding normal standards. These incidents were isolated, often the result of inadequate training of CT [technologists](https://butlerimaging.com.au/ct-scan/) at certain medical facilities. Investigations into these cases revealed that patients had been subjected to radiation levels up to eight times higher than what is typically required for a CT scan. As a result, there has been a concerted effort to improve the training of CT technologists and to establish stricter guidelines for radiation doses in medical imaging.

For the vast majority of patients, the radiation levels involved in a CT scan are far below the threshold needed to cause any noticeable side effects like hair loss or skin redness.

**Myth 2: CT Scans Cause Thousands of Deaths From Cancer**

A common fear associated with CT scans is the notion that the radiation exposure from these scans leads to thousands of cancer deaths each year. This myth stems from concerns about the long-term effects of radiation on the body.

However, there is no concrete evidence to support the claim that CT scans directly cause a significant number of cancer deaths. While it is well-established that excessive radiation exposure can increase the [risk of cancer](https://butlerimaging.com.au/ct-scan/), the radiation dose in a typical CT scan is relatively low. Research shows that there is no measurable way to determine whether cancer deaths are caused by radiation from CT scans or from other factors like environmental toxins, genetics, or lifestyle choices.

It’s also important to remember that medical professionals weigh the benefits of a CT scan against the potential risks when recommending the procedure. The immediate diagnostic benefits often far outweigh the small theoretical risk of developing radiation-induced cancer later in life. In fact, the ability to detect life-threatening conditions early through a CT scan can ultimately save lives.

**Myth 3: Pregnant Women Should Not Undergo Diagnostic Medical Imaging**

Another widespread misconception is that pregnant women should avoid all types of diagnostic medical imaging, including CT scans, due to concerns about potential harm to the developing fetus. While it’s true that any exposure to ionizing radiation should be minimized during pregnancy, the amount of radiation used in modern CT scans is low and highly targeted.

Studies have shown that [diagnostic imaging](https://butlerimaging.com.au/ct-scan/), when used appropriately, does not pose a significant risk to the unborn child. Advances in medical imaging technology have allowed radiologists to use lower doses of radiation while still obtaining high-quality images. This means that, in many cases, the risk to the fetus from a CT scan is negligible.

That said, it’s always important for pregnant women to inform their healthcare provider and the radiologist of their pregnancy before undergoing any diagnostic procedure. In some cases, alternative imaging methods such as ultrasound or MRI, which do not involve radiation, may be considered.

**Myth 4: You Will Be Exposed to Dangerous Levels of Radiation**

A common myth is that radiation exposure from a CT scan is inherently dangerous. While CT scans do involve higher radiation levels than a standard X-ray, modern scanners are designed to use the lowest possible dose of radiation to obtain clear images.

Medical imaging facilities follow strict safety protocols, and radiologists are trained to minimize radiation exposure. Additionally, newer [CT scanners](https://butlerimaging.com.au/ct-scan/) are equipped with advanced technologies that can adjust the radiation dose based on the patient's size and the type of scan being performed. This ensures that patients receive only the amount of radiation necessary for the procedure, keeping the risks to a minimum.

**Myth 5: CT Scans Are Painful**

Some patients mistakenly believe that a CT scan is a painful or uncomfortable procedure. In reality, the scan itself is painless. You may be asked to lie still on a table while the CT machine rotates around you, but there is no discomfort involved. In some cases, a contrast dye may be used to enhance the images, which might cause a brief sensation of warmth, but this is temporary.

**Why Choose Butler Medical Imaging?**

We are local and a privately-owned medical clinics that offers the highest quality medical and Imaging Services in the [Butler Medical Imaging](https://butlerimaging.com.au/appointment/) region. We are the leaders in Bulk Billing with the real benefit of no ‘Out of Pocket’ expenses for you.

**Your Next Step**

Please ensure that you have your Medicare card and referral with you and pop into our location for your consultation. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact us at [+61 8 9544 3999](https://butlerimaging.com.au/appointment/) as we are here to help.