PLEASE NOTE:

1. IF YOU ARE MORE THAN 10 MINUTES LATE OR NOT APPROPRIATELY PREPPED, YOUR APPOINTMENT MAY BE RESCHEDULED. Please let us know if you cannot keep your appointment.

2. CHILDREN MUST BE SUPERVISED BY AN ADULT and are not allowed in the examination room unless they are having the CT exam. Technologists are not responsible for supervision of children.

Plan to spend approximately 1/2 to 4 hours in the Department of Radiology.

Computed Tomography (CT Scan)

Appointment Date/Time: ____________________________

Location: ____________________________

☐ Fasting 4 hours before exam (nothing to eat or drink)

Approximate time you will be here to complete your CT exam:

☐ 1/2 hour  ☐ 1 to 1 1/2 hours  ☐ 2 to 4 hours

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I. What is a CT scan?

Computed Tomography (CT) is a test that combines X-rays with a computer to create images that appear as slices. The result is a detailed picture that may show problems with soft tissue (such as the lining of the sinuses), organs (such as the brain, liver, kidneys or lungs) and bones.

II. How do I prepare for a CT scan?

You may be asked to fast for four hours before the exam. When you arrive for your appointment, you may be asked to drink a contrast agent 1/2 hour to 2 hours prior to the actual CT scan exam.

When you make the appointment, our assistants will tell you what instructions you need to follow.

III. What is a contrast agent?

Contrast agents are special liquids that enhance the accuracy and quality of the CT scan. They are given in three ways: mouth, rectum or vein.

a. **Mouth** The liquid is consumed for CT scans of the abdomen and pelvis areas to fill the stomach and intestines. Rarely, the liquid may cause cramps and diarrhea.

b. **Rectum** A small liquid enema is given to fill the colon for some CT scans of the pelvis. This liquid may cause cramps.

c. **Veins** A diluted iodine-contrast material is injected into an arm vein to enhance all soft-tissue organs. Most patients will experience a hot feeling, especially in the neck and groin. The hot feeling goes away quickly.

Allergic reactions are extremely rare; however, please inform the CT staff if you have any known allergies.
IV. What will happen during a CT scan?

You may be asked to change into a hospital gown. You will then lie on a platform that slides into a doughnut-shaped hole. It is open on both sides. The technologist may ask you to hold your breath for a few seconds. You also may be given contrast material as described above. You will be asked to wait briefly to make sure the images are complete.

V. How will I get my test results?

Your examination will be interpreted by a board-certified radiologist who will transmit the report to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss the results of the examination with you. Unless you are instructed otherwise by your doctor, you may resume your normal activities and go back to your normal diet after the CT scan. THE TECHNOLOGIST IS NOT ALLOWED TO DISCUSS OR PROVIDE YOU THE RESULTS OF YOUR EXAM.

VI. Commonly asked questions

Q. Will the CT scan hurt?
A. No. Since a CT scan is an X-ray procedure, there is no direct pain caused by the exam. However, we may utilize a contrast agent to improve the study. The side effects are described in Section III.

Q. Will I be enclosed in a tunnel?
A. No. A CT scan is done with a doughnut-shaped machine. The part of the body being scanned is placed in the middle of the doughnut, which is open on both ends.

Q. Do I have to fast before the scan?
A. That will depend on what part of the body is being scanned. If we do require you to fast for four hours before the exam, you will receive these instructions when the scan is ordered.

Q. Will the CT technologist be with me?
A. Yes. You will be in contact with a CT technologist at all times. Even when the technologist is not directly in the CT room, you will be able to talk to him or her by intercom. The CT technologist is always able to see you through a large patient-viewing window.

Q. Will the CT scan make a lot of noise?
A. No. The CT scan makes only a buzzing sound as the machine rotates around the doughnut.

Q. Do I have to remain still during the entire examination?
A. You need to remain as still as possible. However, the scan does not take very long. You may be asked to hold your breath during the scan. The technologist will give you all the necessary instructions.

Q. How long will the examination take?
A. The length of the exam will depend on what is being studied. You may be asked to arrive 1/2 hour to 2 hours prior to your scan to drink contrast material. If you need to drink contrast material, you will be monitored in our waiting room. The scan itself takes only a few minutes. However, always allow extra time for the exam in case the exam lasts longer than expected.