



# COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY (CT)

# FACT SHEET

*The Niagara Health System is pleased to provide you with general information about your upcoming exam.*

## **WHAT IS A CT SCAN?**

Your physician has ordered a diagnostic procedure known as Computerized Tomography or CT. This procedure is an important tool in diagnosing and monitoring many diseases and medical conditions. Before your examination begins, a Medical Radiation Technologist will ask you some medical questions, explain your procedure, and assist you into the CT room. You will be asked to lie on a padded table, which will move into the scanner opening and your exam will begin. The scanner is donut-shaped with cameras inside that will move around you during your procedure.

## **WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I PROVIDE BEFORE MY CT EXAMINATION IS SCHEDULED?**

You may be asked to complete a medical questionnaire that will provide information for a safe and proper examination.

## **WHAT SHOULD I WEAR TO MY EXAMINATION?**

Please wear comfortable clothing that does not have zippers or other metal fasteners. If you cannot wear this to your exam, a cloth gown will be provided.

## **WHAT IF I COULD BE PREGNANT OR I AM BREASTFEEDING?**

Please tell the Medical Radiation Technologist if there is a chance of pregnancy or if you are breastfeeding. The test may have to be either modified or delayed.

## **IS THERE ANY PREPARATION ON MY PART PRIOR TO THE SCAN?**

Most CT examinations require no preparation. For exams that do require preparation, information will be provided to you by your physician's office.

## **WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO MY APPOINTMENT?**

Please bring your Ontario Health Card. Please note that the Niagara Health System is a scent-free environment.

## **WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT DURING MY EXAMINATION?**

You may be required to drink water or a special solution prior to your exam. You may have an intravenous line placed if you require an injection for your exam. You have to remain as still as possible for the exam. The Medical Radiation Technologist may ask you to hold your breath at various times during your procedure so that the images will be clear.

## **IS A CT SCAN PAINFUL?**

The CT scan itself is painless. If you have an injection of contrast material, you may experience different sensations that will be explained to you by the Medical Radiation Technologist prior to the exam.

## **WILL I RECEIVE A RADIATION DOSE?**

You will receive a radiation dose from the CT study, however, your referring physician has determined that the benefits of undergoing the study outweigh the risks.

## **HOW LONG WILL MY EXAMINATION LAST?**

The scan lasts approximately 3-5 minutes, although preparation may require up to an hour. Your exam start time may be delayed if there are emergency cases.

## **HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY CT SCAN RESULTS?**

The pictures are reported by specially trained doctors. The results are sent to your doctor.