

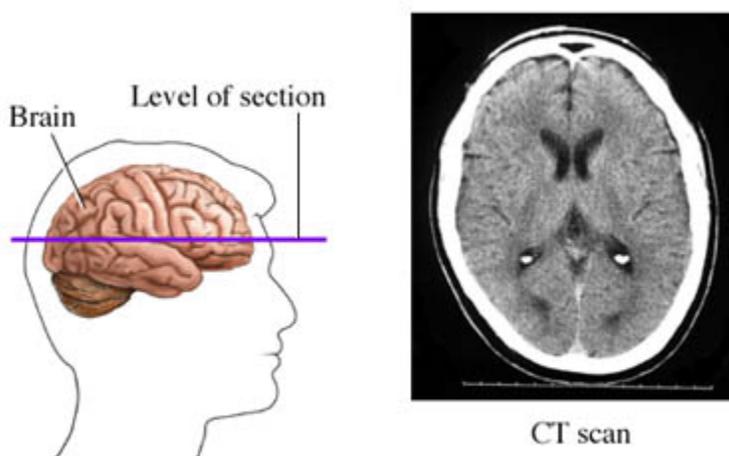
CT Scan of the Head / Sinus

(Head CT)

Definition

A CT scan uses x-rays and a computer to make pictures of the inside of the body. In this case, the images are of the head.

CT Scan of the Head



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Reasons for Test

A CT scan is done to study your skull, brain, jaw, sinuses, and facial bones. It will look for signs of injuries, tumors, infections, or other diseases.

Your doctor may recommend a head CT if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Seizures
- Head injury or injury to the face or eyes
- Dizziness or problems with balance
- Confusion
- Behavior or personality change
- Chronic nasal congestion
- Swelling in the face, head, or neck

Possible Complications

A medication called "contrast" may be used to help improve the pictures. Complications with contrast are rare. Possible complications include:

- Allergic reaction
- Kidney failure

Some doctors believe radiation exposure from CT scans can increase the risk of cancer. There are greater concerns about side effects in children and pregnant women. Be sure to discuss these risks with your doctor before the test.

What to Expect

Prior to Test

The technologist may ask you to:

- Remove any metal objects (for example, jewelry, hearing aids, or dentures).

Description of the Test

If contrast is needed, it will be injected into a vein.

You will be positioned on a special moving table. The table will move slowly through the CT scanner. You will need to stay still during the entire test. The technician may need to use a device to keep your head still. As the scanner takes pictures, you will hear humming and clicking. You will be able to talk to the technician through an intercom.

After Test

If you had contrast, you may be asked to drink extra fluid. This will flush the contrast from your body.

How Long Will It Take?

About 10-15 minutes

Will It Hurt?

CT scans are painless. If you receive contrast, you may feel some discomfort when the IV is placed and/or removed. You may feel warm and flushed when contrast is injected into your vein or you may have a metallic taste in your mouth.

Results

The CT images will be sent to a radiologist for analysis. Your doctor will receive the results and discuss them with you.

Call Your Doctor

If you were given contrast, call your doctor if any of the following occurs after the test:

- Hives
- Itching
- Nausea

- Swollen, itchy eyes
- Tightness of throat
- Difficulty breathing

In case of an emergency, call for medical help right away.

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