

Preparation for a computerized tomography scan (CT or scan)

The scanner (CT) is a radiological test that uses ionizing radiation. In addition, in a high percentage of tests it is necessary to inject iodine contrasts.

Before taking a scan, keep in mind the recommendations regarding ionizing radiation. In addition, if your study has intravenous contrast, you should take into account the recommendations regarding iodinated contrasts.

In the following tests, intravenous contrast is usually injected, so you should go on an empty stomach and follow the recommendations regarding contrasts:

- ✓ CT of the neck
- ✓ CT of the chest
- ✓ CT of the abdomen
- ✓ CT of the pelvis
- ✓ CT corporal
- ✓ CT vascular (angio CT)

For practical purposes, the only cases in which contrast is not usually injected is in the CT of the skull and in the CT of bones (hand, elbow, etc).

If the test that you have been asked for is a virtual colonoscopy, in addition to the recommendations referring to the iodinated radiation and contrasts, you must perform a thorough colon cleansing.



Information on radiation and pregnancy



These tests use ionizing radiation (x-rays), so if you are a woman of childbearing age and may be pregnant, inform your doctor when you request the radiological test.

In the radiology department, measures are taken to avoid exposure to ionizing radiation in pregnant women. In case of being pregnant and it is essential to perform the radiological test, you will be informed of the risks and you will be asked to sign an informed consent.

Information on iodinated contrasts

Iodinated contrasts are drugs that are injected intravenously while the radiological study is performed. It allows some internal structures to be enhanced and, in many cases, they are fundamental to reach a diagnosis.

Iodinated contrasts are very safe medications. However, before the test is done, it is essential that you have some information:



- ✓ Some patients are allergic to iodinated contrasts. These allergies are very rare. If you have ever had an iodinated contrast and have had some type of reaction, inform your doctor.
- ✓ Iodinated contrasts should not be administered in patients with renal insufficiency. If you have kidney problems, inform your doctor.
- ✓ Iodinated contrasts have an effect on the fetus and the infant (they pass into the blood of the fetus and into the mother's milk). For this reason, you should inform your doctor if you are pregnant or if you are breast-feeding your child.
- ✓ If you are diabetic and taking oral hypoglycemic agents (such as metformin), you should inform your doctor, since if your kidneys have altered function, the administration of iodinated contrast may trigger a metabolic acidosis.

In the radiology department you will be asked about all these sections before injecting the contrast and you will be informed of any doubt.

It is recommended that if you are going to do a test with iodinated contrasts go fasting (a minimum of 6 hours), but well hydrated (drink plenty of fluids).