

CTA

CTA (Computed Tomographic Angiography) is a special type of imaging examination that provides detailed pictures of the body's arteries and veins. Intravenous Iodine-based contrast is given during the study to make the arteries and veins more prominent. The series of images obtained during CT scanning can be used to create a 3-dimensional picture of the blood vessels. These detailed images can often replace the need for traditional catheter-directed angiography to determine if a patient may benefit from angioplasty or stent placement. Interventional Radiologists are specially trained to interpret these high-tech images and can diagnose disease of the arteries and veins with CTA.

Common Uses for CTA

CTA is commonly used to evaluate the blood vessels in the brain, neck, heart, lungs, abdomen, pelvis, kidneys, and legs. CTA is an integral tool in the diagnosis and treatment of various diseases including Peripheral Arterial Disease in the legs, Atherosclerosis of the carotid arteries in the neck, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms, Pulmonary Emboli in the lungs, to name a few.

Preparing for a CTA

- You should not eat for six hours prior to the exam.
- You may have water and your routine medications.
- Absolutely no Viagra, Cialis, Levitra or any other erectile dysfunction medications are to be taken for three days prior to the exam.
- No caffeine containing products for 24 hours before the study.
- An intravenous (IV) line will be inserted into your arm

What Should I Expect?

During the Study

You will be given an intravenous (IV) contrast (iodine contrast or x-ray dye) for this study. A heart monitor will be attached to assess your heart rhythm and rate. An oxygen tube may be placed into your

nose during the study. You may receive medication to help lower your heart rate. You will receive one dose of nitroglycerine under your tongue during the study.

After The Study

You will remain on a heart monitor for 15-30 minutes. The radiologist will evaluate your study and issue a report to your physician. Be sure to eat and drink plenty of fluids after the study. Since you received IV contrast it is advisable to drink an extra two glasses of water. If you take metformin (Glucophage, Avandmet) do not take these for 48 hours following the study. You may resume normal activities and your normal diet following the test.

Rarely patients can develop delayed contrast reactions. If any mild rash or swelling develops, call the radiology department nurse on the information sheet provided. If symptoms are severe, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, go to the nearest emergency department immediately.

If you were given medication to lower your heart rate, you may experience temporary mild dizziness, headache or lightheadedness. If these symptoms include nausea or vomiting, or persist greater than 24 hours, you should call your family physician or go to the nearest emergency department.

Information reprinted with permission from the Society of Interventional Radiology, Copyright 2004?2009, www.SIRweb.org. All rights reserved.