

What is CT Scanning of the Abdomen/Pelvis?

CT scanning—sometimes called CAT scanning—is a noninvasive medical test that helps physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions.

CT scanning combines special x-ray equipment with sophisticated computers to produce multiple images or pictures of the inside of the body. These cross-sectional images of the area being studied can then be examined on a computer monitor or printed.

CT scans of internal organs, bone, soft tissue and blood vessels provide greater clarity and reveal more details than regular x-ray exams.

How should I prepare for the CT scan?

You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing to your exam. You may be given a gown to wear during the procedure.

Metal objects including jewelry, eyeglasses, dentures and hairpins may affect the CT images and should be left at home or removed prior to your exam. You may also be asked to remove hearing aids and removable dental work.

You may be asked not to eat or drink anything for several hours beforehand, especially if a [contrast material](#) will be used in your exam. You should inform your physician of any medications you are taking and if you have any allergies. If you have a known allergy to contrast material, or "dye," your doctor may prescribe medications to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction.

Also inform your doctor of any recent illnesses or other medical conditions, and if you have a history of heart disease, asthma, diabetes, kidney disease or thyroid problems. Any of these conditions may increase the risk of an unusual adverse effect.

Women should always inform their physician and the CT technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant. See the [Safety page](#) for more information about pregnancy and x-rays.