

The exam takes little time, causes no pain, and does not require injection of contrast material. No radiation remains in patient's body after a CT examination.

Risks:

There is exposure to radiation however minimal in comparison to the benefits of the scan. CT scanning is not recommended for pregnant women unless medically necessary because of the potential risk to the baby.

Preparing for your exam:

No special preparation is necessary in advance of a cardiac CT examination.

You may continue to take your usual medications, but should avoid caffeine and smoking for four hours before the exam.

You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing to your exam.

You may be given a gown to wear during the procedure.

You may be asked to remove all metal objects including jewelry, eyeglasses, dentures and hairpins that may affect the CT images.

Women should always inform their physician and the CT technologist if there is any possibility that they may be pregnant.

Locations

OAKS LOCATION
1800 West Hibiscus Blvd., Suite 100
Melbourne, FL 32901
(321) 726-3800 phone
(321) 726-3842 fax

HOURS
Monday through Friday
(closed major holidays)
Lobby hours:
7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.



SUNTREE LOCATION
6300 N Wickham Road, Suite 100
Melbourne, FL 32940
(321) 775-7100 phone
(321) 775-7101 fax

HOURS
Monday through Friday
(closed major holidays)
Lobby hours:
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.



Are You At Risk For A Heart Attack or Heart Disease?

Talk To Your Doctor About Coronary Calcium Scoring

\$ 100 Exam

(Physician Referral Required)

(Oaks) 1800 W. Hibiscus Blvd. Suite 100 726-3800
(Suntree) 6300 N. Wickham Rd. Suite 100 775-7100

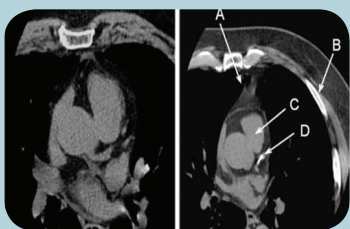
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What Is Cardiac CT For Calcium Scoring?

A Cardiac CT scan for coronary calcium is a non-invasive way of obtaining information about the presence, location and extent of calcified plaque in the coronary arteries—the vessels that supply oxygen-containing blood to the heart muscle. Calcified plaque results when there is a build-up of fat and other substances under the inner layer of the artery.



(Left) CT of normal coronary artery.

(Right) Abnormal CT showing calcium in the left coronary artery.

A: sternum

B: rib

C: heart

D: calcium in the coronary artery

The material can calcify which signals the presence of atherosclerosis, a disease of the vessel wall, also called coronary artery disease (CAD). People with this disease have an increased risk for heart attacks. In addition, over time, progression of plaque build up (CAD) can narrow the arteries or even close off blood flow to the heart. The result may be chest pain, also called “angina” in the chest or a heart attack.

Because calcium is a marker of CAD, the amount of calcium detected on a Cardiac CT scan is a helpful prognostic tool. The findings on a Cardiac CT are expressed as a calcium score. Another name for this test is coronary artery calcium scoring.

Common Uses Of Calcium Scorings?

The goal of Cardiac CT for calcium scoring is to determine if CAD is present and to what extent, even if there are no symptoms. It is a screening study that may be recommended by a physician for patients with risk factors for CAD but no clinical symptoms.

The major risk factors are:

- Abnormally high blood cholesterol levels
- A family history of heart disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Cigarette smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Being physically inactive

How Is The Procedure Performed?

The technologist will position you on the CT examination table and attach small electrodes to your chest and to an electrocardiograph (ECG) machine that records the electrical activity of the heart. This makes it possible to record CT scans when the heart is not actively contracting. Patients are asked to hold their breath for a period of 10 to 20 seconds while images are recorded.

CT imaging is compared to looking into a loaf of bread by cutting the loaf into thin slices. When the image slices are reassembled by computer software, the result is a very detailed multidimensional view of the body’s interior. New scanners, such as the 16-slice used by UCI, obtain multiple slices in a single rotation therefore allowing thinner slices to be obtained in a shorter period of time, resulting in more detail and additional view capabilities.

Modern CT scanners are so fast that they can scan through large sections of the body in just a few seconds. The entire procedure including

the actual CT scanning is usually completed in about 15 minutes.

Who Interprets The Results?

At UCI, an on-site, board certified Radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to your primary care physician or the physician ordering the scan, who will review the results with you.

A negative Cardiac CT shows no calcification within the coronary arteries which suggests that CAD is absent or so minimal it cannot be seen by this technique.

A positive Cardiac CT means that CAD is present, regardless of whether the patient is experiencing any symptoms or not. The amount of calcification—expressed as the calcium score—may help to predict the likelihood of a myocardial infarction (heart attack) in the coming years and helps your physician decide on what action may need to be taken; preventative medicine or other measures such as diet and exercise to lower the risk of heart attack or in some cases, further diagnostic testing may be necessary.

The extent of CAD is graded according to your calcium score:

Calcium Score	Presence of CAD
0	No evidence of CAD
1-10	Minimal evidence of CAD
11-100	Mild evidence of CAD
101-400	Moderate evidence of CAD
Over 400	Extensive evidence of CAD

Benefits vs. Risks

Benefits:

Convenient and noninvasive way of evaluating whether you may be at increased risk for a heart attack.