Why am I having IV Contrast during my CT Scan?

Your radiation oncologist has recommended a procedure that requires injection of contrast medium into your vein. This injection will enable the radiation oncologist to better see certain areas inside your body.

Is there any risk involved with having IV Contrast?

Most people have the injection of contrast without any problems. Mild allergic reactions such as itching and hives sometimes occur. These reactions may pass without treatment, but respond quickly to medication when needed. Very rarely, more severe allergic reactions can occur. These can include a drop of blood pressure and changes to the heartbeat. In extremely rare cases, stroke or death can occur.

The doctors involved in your care are aware of the risks and possible complications associated with this procedure. The information from your CT scan with IV Contrast will be useful when planning your radiation treatments.

If you have had a previous allergic reaction to contrast medium or any severe allergic reaction, it is very important that you let us know before your CT Scan.

What do I need to do before my Planning CT Scan with IV Contrast?

- See your doctor regarding any changes in medication. If you are taking the oral medication Metformin HCL (Glucophage) for diabetes you will need to stop this medication on the day of your CT and for 48 hours after the test. Your doctor will order a blood test for you to have at least 48 hours after the injection of the contrast. Please discuss the results of the blood test with your doctor before restarting your Metformin HCL (Glucophage).

- Drink extra non-caffeinated fluids including 500 mL (16 ounces) of prepared soup broth/bouillon (e.g. OXO cubes) during the 12 hours prior to contrast administration.

- Do not eat any solid food for 4 hours prior to your appointment. Do not drink anything, including the broth/bouillon, during the 1 hour prior to your appointment.
Planning CT (Computerized Tomography) Scan with IV (Intravenous) Contrast

What Can I Expect During the Planning CT Scan with IV Contrast?

As the contrast is injected into your arm, you may experience a metal like taste in your mouth or a warm feeling throughout your body. These are normal sensations and pass quickly. If you feel anything unusual let your healthcare team know.

After the CT Scan is complete: you are required to stay in the department for at least 15 minutes.

Do I need to follow any special instructions after I go home?

You may resume your normal diet immediately following the CT. Drink extra non-caffeinated fluids, including 500 mL (16 ounces) of prepared soup broth/bouillon (e.g. OXO cubes) during the 12 hours following contrast administration. If you are on a fluid restricted diet, please discuss your fluid intake with your doctor. Your doctor will let you know if additional instructions are required.

Your injection site should be watched for swelling or bleeding. If it remains dry, you may remove the bandage or dressing after two hours, unless you have been instructed otherwise.

If you have any other questions or concerns that have not been answered here, please feel free to ask a member of your healthcare team.

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