

# CT Coronary Angiogram



## What is a CT Coronary Angiogram?

A CT coronary **angiogram** is used to directly visualise the heart arteries and the fatty deposits (plaques) that can develop within them. This plaque can mean your heart is not getting the blood supply it needs, which can cause chest pain (angina) and heart attacks. Like a coronary angiogram, a CT coronary angiogram involves injecting an iodine-based dye into your bloodstream to highlight your blood vessels. Unlike the traditional angiogram, which involves inserting a catheter (a thin flexible tube) via the wrist or groin into the heart, a CT coronary angiogram, is non-invasive. This means that there are fewer potential complications such as bleeding or bruising.

You may also be given some medication to slow down your heartbeat, making it easier to take images.

## Why would you have a CT Coronary Angiogram?

The CT coronary angiogram is the first line test recommended by UK guidelines for assessing patients presenting chest pain to outpatient cardiology or chest pain clinics. It will tell your cardiologist whether you have plaque in your coronary arteries, the more plaques you have the more likely a heart attack is in the future. It will also tell them whether plaque is obstructing blood flow to the heart muscle and causing your chest pain. A CT coronary angiogram can also be useful if you have heart failure, but your doctor doesn't know why, if your doctor suspects you may have an abnormality in the structure of your heart, or if you are being considered for transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI).

## What equipment do we use?

The CT scanner is like an ordinary X-ray machine, you will be asked to lie flat for your scan. The main difference is that on the CT machine you will be passed through a wide ring. Most patients have no difficulty with this.



## What are the benefits of having a CT Coronary Angiogram?

The test helps determine whether you have any narrowing in your coronary arteries.

## Who should not have a CT Coronary Angiogram?

The CT angiogram may not be suitable for patients with advanced kidney problems because the dye can worsen kidney function. It's also not suitable for anyone who's allergic to the dye or for anyone with severe asthma, because the dye can cause narrowing of airways.

## What are the risks of having a CT Coronary Angiogram?

Every day we are all exposed to natural radiation such as from the sun. Like any X-ray, CT involves a small extra dose, but every effort is made to keep this as small as possible. However, even this small extra amount may be harmful to an unborn child.

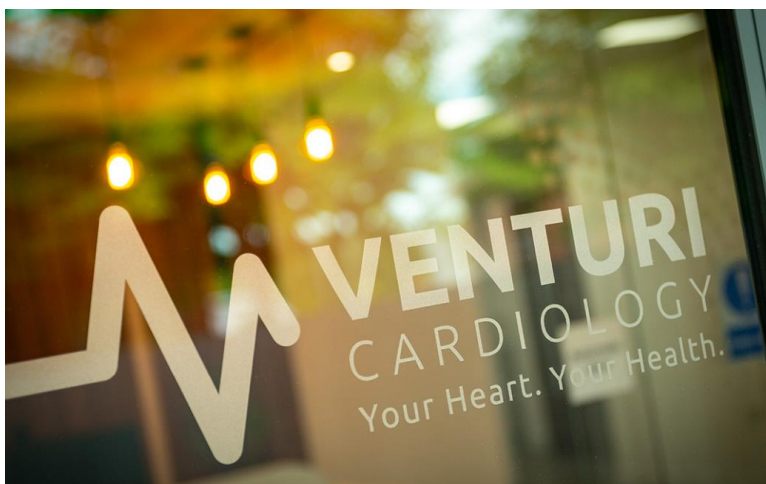
## What is CT Dye?

CT Dye is used to enhance the images produced by CT scans. CT Dye is also called "contrast mediums" and "contrast agents".

There are different types of contrast that can be used. Some are given by injection into a vein (intravenously), others are swallowed. CT contrast is clear and contains iodine.

Some people are allergic to the iodine (or other ingredients) in the contrast agent.

Allergic reactions can cause itchy skin, hives (swollen lumps on the skin), and may also cause nausea and vomiting.



## Preparing for your scan:

Please do not eat anything for four hours before your appointment.

Two hours before your appointment please drink at least one pint (500mls) of water.

Do not drink tea or coffee on the day of your appointment.

Special precautions are taken for patients who have diabetes and take Metformin tablets, or patients who may have had problems with X-ray dye in the past. If you think you may be one of these patients, please telephone Venturi on Tel: 01925 748245 before your appointment.

Patients who take Viagra should not take it for 24hours before their scan.