COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY (CT) ANGIOGRAPHY

CT angiography is a method of visualizing different anatomy by the use of x-rays with computerized images. Beams of x-ray are passed from a rotating device through the areas of interest on your body from several different angles so as to create cross-sectional images. These images are then reassembled by a computer into a three-dimensional picture of the area being studied.

Prior to the start of the exam, we will ask you questions regarding any condition that may make this procedure more complicated for you. An intravenous (I.V.) will be placed in your arm or hand for the administration of a contrast agent to help visualize the vessels.

The CT tech will have you lie on your back on the CT scanner table with your arms above your head resting on a pillow. You may be asked to hold your breath for approximately 20 seconds during the exam. As you pass through the x-ray beams, the contrast will be injected into the vein to better visualize the vessels. During the injection of the contrast you will feel a hot sensation through out your body, which will pass quickly.

POTENTIAL RISKS
As in many aspects of medicine, there are both benefits and risks associated with the use of CT. The main risks are:

- A risk of allergic reaction, which may be serious whenever dye-containing iodine is injected.
- CTA should be avoided in patients with kidney disease or severe diabetes because x-ray dye can further harm kidney functions.
- If a large amount of x-ray dye leaks out under the skin while the I.V. is in place, skin damage can result. If you feel any pain in this area during dye injection, you should immediately inform the technologist.
- Because of the possibility of serious harm to a developing fetus, it is IMPORTANT that women who are or may be pregnant not have this test. Please notify the CT technologist if there is any possibility that you may be pregnant.

Any complication or adverse reaction will be managed by emergency treatments available. Any of these may require unexpected hospital admission. There is always a physician on-site.

Radiation Risks From CT

- Abnormal test results, from an incidental finding, may lead to further follow-up tests that may present additional risks.
- There is increased possibility of developing cancer from x-ray exposure.

The chances for absorbed x-rays to develop cancer are thought to be very small for radiation doses of the size that are used with CT procedures. Such estimates of the cancer risk from x-ray exposure level have a broad range of uncertainty. Under some rare circumstances of prolonged, high-dose exposure, x-rays can cause other adverse health affects, such as skin erythema (reddening), skin tissue injury, genetic effects, and birth defects. However, at the exposure levels associated with most medical imaging procedures, including CT, those other adverse effects would likely not occur.