

Harbor-UCLA Medical Foundation Inc. – CT Scanner

EXPLANATION OF INTRAVENOUS CONTRAST STUDY

Intravenous Contrast Studies require that a venous injection known as iodinated contrast vein be injected with a liquid into your vein. Sometimes, the contrast is dripped into the vein from a bottle, but for our purpose, an automatic injector will inject it. This liquid is commonly used in x-ray and CT procedures to help visualize organs, certain pathology, and blood vessels.

The contrast is injected before the last segment of the exam and can cause a warm or flushed feeling and in some cases, a metallic taste in the mouth or short term nausea. Immediately after the injection, x-ray images will be obtained of your heart.

You will be asked to sign a form authorizing us to perform this procedure and injection because there are certain risks involved. Minor allergic reactions of no significance can occur in about one in ten patients in the form of a little itching, sneezing, or a few hives. Less common minor reactions include slight wheezing after injection. Please inform a member of our team if you do experience any of these symptoms.

Serious complications occur in about one in 10,000 exams, and include serious allergic reactions, drop in blood pressure, or convulsions. Very rarely (one in 100,000 exams), these complications result in fatality. Your doctor has considered these risks before recommending this examination and believes your symptoms justify the procedure.

Because the complications occur less frequently than in many other medical procedures, we are able to perform intravenous contrast studies daily on patients in almost every physical condition, with a good assurance of safety. We are fully prepared to deal with any complications that may arise.

As part of our procedure and to make this examination as safe as possible, we would like to know something about your previous history. Please inform the technicians whether you have any allergies of any type (including asthma, hay fever, allergy to food or drugs), whether you have had previous intravenous pyelograms or arteriograms, and whether you have had a previous reaction to the contrast. We also need to know if you have had any prior issues with kidney function or abnormal blood work like Bun and Creatinine values which would indicate kidney malfunction. If so, we will give you a medicine called mucomyst to help protect your kidneys. The contrast agent is excreted through your kidneys and can cause further damage to kidneys that are already in trouble.

Your doctor or the Cardiologist will answer any questions you may have about this examination before performing it.