

Computed tomography of the large intestine

This examination is also known as CT colonography.

You have an appointment for a computed tomography (CT) scan. The unit responsible for your care will instruct you on the place and time of the scan.

The computed tomography uses X-rays to produce cross-sectional images or slices of the examined area.

Please reserve approximately 1 hour for your visit. The examination takes about 30 minutes. Patients who need urgent examination may be examined before you.

The arrival instructions or the appointment letter contains our contact information if you have any questions about the examination.

Before the procedure

- **If you are hypersensitive to iodine contrast agent**, please inform the doctor who referred you to this examination as soon as possible.
- **If you are pregnant or suspect that you are pregnant**, please inform the doctor who referred you to this examination as soon as possible.
- If you are an inpatient in the hospital, you will receive the medication needed for cleansing at the ward. If you arrive to the examination as an outpatient, you need to buy the colon cleansing products from a pharmacy: Citrafleet or Picoprep. No prescription is required.
- If you wish, you may purchase fiber-free supplementary nutrition drinks rich in energy, such as Nutridrink, Semper Teho, Dietta Teho.
- In the evening preceding the examination, you must drink the contrast agent Gastrografin. Pick up the Gastrografin solution (2 x 8 ml) from the X-ray unit where your examination will take place. In Meilahti X-ray Unit, you can pick up the solution from the 1st floor registration desk, follow the black line.

During the week preceding the examination

Do not eat

- berries, fruit, or vegetables with seeds,
- bread or porridge with seeds or whole grains
- dietary fiber products that enhance bowel function

Otherwise, you may eat as usual. Drinking plenty of fluids and exercising help promote bowel movements.

On the day before the examination:

- You may only consume liquids, such as water, tea, coffee, filtered berry soup, filtered meat, fish, or chicken broth, and juice without pulp.
- You can use supplementary nutrition drinks, if needed.
- Do not eat any solid food.
- Drink plenty of fluids, at least 2–3 litres during the day.
- At 8:00 am, first drink two glasses of fluids. Mix the contents of the first pouch of Citrafleet or Picoprep with 150 ml of cold water and drink it immediately and then drink at least two more glasses of cold water right after. In addition, you may drink liquids as you wish or supplementary nutrition drinks.
- At 1:00 p.m., instead of lunch, drink at least three (3) large glasses of liquids or nutrition drinks, preferably even more.
- At 4:00 p.m., first drink two glasses of fluids. Mix the contents of the second pouch of Citrafleet or Picoprep with 150 ml of cold water, drink it immediately, and then immediately drink at least two more glasses of cold water and preferably even more. If necessary, drink more fluids or supplementary nutrition drinks during the evening.
- At 9 p.m., drink two (2) bottles (8 ml/bottle) of undiluted Gastrogafin solution.

In the morning of the examination day:

- Do not eat anything, but you can drink up to 200 ml of fluids or 200 ml of a supplementary nutrition drink.
- Do not smoke.
- Do not suck on any cough drops or chew gum.
- You may take your prescription medicine as usual, except for diabetes.
- If you are on tablet medication for diabetes, take the tablets only after the examination.
- If you are on insulin treatment for diabetes, the insulin dose is reduced before the examination. The unit responsible for your care will give you detailed instructions on this.

During the examination

You must be completely still during the scan because movement makes the images blurry. The radiographer can hear and see you and talk to you.

Prior to the scan, the large intestine is filled with carbon dioxide. This will cause a sensation of fullness in your stomach, but it will not cause strong pain.

During the examination you will be lying on the examination table on your back and stomach.

Often a contrast agent containing iodine will be injected in a vein of your arm. The contrast agent enhances visibility of blood vessels and various tissues. It will cause a passing warm sensation and sometimes a metallic taste in the mouth. The contrast agent leaves your body with urine.

After the examination

It is best to eat lightly at first after the examination.

The medication given during the examination may temporarily affect your vision, so do not drive a car for about 2 hours following the examination.

You will receive the results of the examination from the doctor who treats you. If you do not know how to find out the results, please contact the outpatient clinic or ward that referred you to this examination.

Please note

You will not be charged for the procedure.

Cancel the appointment if you cannot come. If you do not cancel, you will be charged a fine.

For more on the fee, visit www.hus.fi/en/clientfees > Fee for unused service.

Further information

For more on the examination visit www.terveyskyla.fi/en/examinationhub > Imaging examinations > [Computed tomography \(CT\) examination](#)