



ECoVets Veterinary Specialists & ER
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****Handout Computed tomography****

****What is Computed Tomography****

Computed tomography or CT, refers to an X-ray imaging procedure in which a narrow beam of X-rays is aimed at a patient and quickly rotated around the body, producing signals that are processed by the machine's computer to generate cross-sectional images, or "slices." These slices are called tomographic images and can give a clinician more detailed information than conventional X-rays.

Once several successive slices are collected by the machine's computer, they can be digitally "stacked" together to form a three-dimensional (3D) image of the patient that allows for easier identification and more detailed evaluation of basic structures as well as possible tumors, disease, or other abnormalities.

****What to expect****

The patient will be dropped off with us the day of the imaging procedure. For all CT scans, patients undergo either sedation or general anesthesia to ensure they remain completely still for high-quality imaging. Once sedated or anesthetized, your pet is carefully positioned on the CT table, and the area of interest is scanned. An anesthesia consent form will be provided prior to the procedure.

We have **the only 128-slice CT scanner used in veterinary medicine in Jacksonville and surroundings** that can complete scans within seconds minimizing anesthesia and sedation time, and minimizing risk factors. Most of the time is spent preparing your pet for imaging and allowing them to rest comfortably in our quiet kennel rooms before and after the procedure.

****At home preparation for the CT scan****

Please have your animal fast 12 hours before your visit (unless diabetic). Water does not need to be restricted. Morning medication is okay to give. Food in the stomach will interfere with our ability to obtain good images and make a diagnosis.

The patient could also aspirate or vomit and inhale the contents of their stomach, leading to possible pneumonia. If you have concerns about this, please discuss them with us.

****Requirements prior to the CT scan****

Please have your veterinarian perform blood work, which is not older than 3-4 weeks so that we can assess the health status of your pet. We specifically need to evaluate the kidney function. If no recent blood work has been performed prior to the CT scan, we may need to run blood work in house the day of the CT scan.



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****Contrast medium****

IV contrast medium is used for the CT scans. We use a low-osmolar, non-ionic contrast agent to reduce the risk to our patients of contrast Induced Nephrotoxicity (CIN) (kidney damage). We also reduce the risk of this by using intravenous fluid therapy in indicated cases and blood work to assess kidney values that there is no reason to avoid the use of contrast. There is a rare, but reported risk of an allergic reaction to the contrast agent causing anaphylaxis (shock). This would be during or immediately after the procedure. Adverse side effects are rare with non-ionic contrast media in correctly hydrated patients. *We have our patients on intravenous fluids for 4 hours after the procedure to maintain a good hydration status and minimize side effects.*

****Imaging Results****

Our radiologist will examine all of the images and will provide a written report to your email address and to your referring veterinarian. A follow-up about the results will need to be done with either your regular veterinarian or with a specialist if further specialist care is needed.