

# WHAT IS A CT SCAN?

## CT SCAN BASICS



A CT scan, or cat scan, is a way to take a picture of the inside of your body using a large, round camera that your body will fit inside of. The picture will help your doctor learn more about your body.

## STEP ONE

You will lay down on the CT scanner's bed. Your nurse will place a seat belt over your belly and will make sure you are comfortable. If you're cold, you can ask for a blanket.



## STEP TWO

While you are laying down, the bed will move into the opening in the CT scanner's camera. Nothing will touch you. It is important that you keep your body very still.



## STEP THREE

While you are inside the CT scanner's camera, you will hear swishing noises, like a washing machine or dishwasher. This is the sound of the camera taking pictures.



## STEP FOUR

You might be asked to hold your breath for a short time while the CT scanner is taking pictures. This helps your body stay extra still so that the pictures come out clearly.



## STEP FIVE

Some pictures need to be taken with contrast. Contrast is fluid that is put in your body through an IV. (Learn more about IVs [here](#).) The fluid glows under the camera and helps your doctor see different parts of your body.



## STEP SIX

If your picture needs contrast, the bed will move you out of the camera and your nurse will put the contrast through your IV. Your body might start to feel warm, even like you peed yourself, but that feeling will go away. Don't worry, you won't actually pee!



## STEP SEVEN

The bed will move back into the CT scanner for another picture. Once the picture is taken, the bed will move out again and you can sit up and get off the bed. The picture will be sent to your doctor.



## HELPFUL HINTS

While you are getting your picture taken, you can wrap up in a blanket from home, hold onto a stuffed animal or squishy ball, or listen to music.

