

A Cardiac CT (Computed Tomography) is a procedure that uses X-rays and advanced computer processing to create detailed and realistic 3-D images of the heart and related blood vessels. A contrast material (X-ray dye) is usually injected intravenously to better visualize the anatomy such as the chambers of the heart and the coronary arteries.

An IV line is started in a large vein in the arm to administer contrast (dye) during your procedure. The blood pressure and heart rate is taken to determine if a drug is needed to lower heart rate for the examination (beta blocker). A technologist places three electrodes on the chest to monitor the ECG, which charts the heart's electrical activity during the test. When the images are acquired, the patient is asked not to move and to breath hold for 15 seconds. During the scan, the table will move inside a donut-shaped scanner in conjunction with administering the contrast agent to help produce the images. Once the technologist is sure that all the information is collected, the IV is removed. The CT scan itself takes about 15 minutes.