

Heart Calcium Scoring

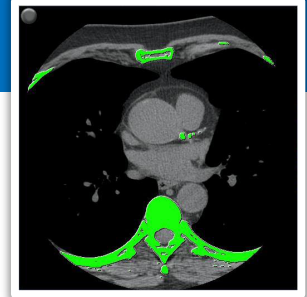


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Heart calcium scoring uses a Computed Tomography (CT) scan to find the buildup of calcium on the walls of the arteries within the heart.

The coronary arteries supply the blood to the heart. Normally, the coronary arteries do not contain calcium. The presence of calcium in the coronary arteries is a sign of Coronary Artery Disease (CAD).

Heart Calcium Scoring is a preventative procedure to check for early heart disease and how severe the heart disease is. Since this is a preventative screening procedure a prescription or referral from your doctor is not necessary.

This preventative screening may be recommended by a physician if you have risk factors for CAD but no clinical symptoms yet. It is often suggested for men 45 years or older and women who are 55 years and above or are postmenopausal.

Some patients choose to have the test without the recommendation of a doctor in order to discover if early stage CAD is present or reassure themselves that they do not have advanced CAD.

Major Risk Factors for CAD:

- Age
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Cigarette smoking
- Abnormal high blood cholesterol levels
- Being overweight or obese
- Being physically inactive

Your Heart Calcium Score

- **0** No plaques is present. You have less than 5% chance of having heart disease. Risk of heart attack is very low.
- **1-10** Small amount of plaque is present. You have less than a 10% chance of having heart disease. Risk of heart attack is low.
- **11-100** Plaque is present. You have mild heart disease. Your chance of having a heart attack is moderate. Talk with your doctor about possible treatment.
- **101-400** A moderate amount of plaque is present. You have heart disease and plaque may be blocking an artery. Your chance of having a heart attack is moderate to high. Your doctor may want more tests and start treatment.
- **Over 400** A large amount of plaque is present. You have more than a 90% chance that plaque is blocking one of your arteries. Your chance of heart attack is high. Your doctor will want more tests and will start treatment.

Preparing for your Heart Calcium Score Scan:

- No caffeine 6 hours prior to test
- No smoking 6 hours prior to test
- No gum 6 hours prior to test
- No exercise 6 hours prior to test