CT Virtual Colonoscopy (CTVC)

The information contained in this letter is intended to make your experience as smooth as possible. It highlights what to expect prior to your scheduled exam date and information on exam scheduling or rescheduling, insurance authorization, and exam preparation. If there is any chance that you may be pregnant, please inform your referring physician before proceeding with the examination or the exam bowel prep. Please arrive promptly at your scheduled arrival time.

Phone Resources:

➢ Radiology Scheduling Center:
  Phone: (650) 723-6855       Fax: (650) 723-6036
  Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30am – 6:00pm
  Website: stanfordhealthcare.org/imaging

➢ Patient Financial Clearance:
  Phone: 650-724-4445 or Toll Free: 877-291-7335
  Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm
  The PFC is available to assist with insurance and/or authorization questions.

Timeline Expectations:

➢ 30 days prior to exam date:
  o Insurance authorization will be initiated by Patient Financial Clearance (PFC)
  o Insurance authorization is only valid for 30 days and rescheduled appointments may require a new authorization

➢ 14-21 days prior to exam date:
  o Insurance authorization status should be completed

➢ 7-14 days prior to exam date:
  o CTVC bowel prep prescription sent to the specialty pharmacy. The pharmacy will contact you by phone when the prescription is available.
  o The CTVC bowel prep prescription will only be sent to the specialty pharmacy once the CTVC exam is authorized by your insurance, or self-pay arrangements are confirmed by Patient Financial Clearance.
  o Kaiser patients will obtain bowel prep from a Kaiser pharmacy.
Bowel prep is available only at Walgreens

Walgreens Pharmacy
217 Alma Street, Suite 200,
Palo Alto, CA 94301
PHONE: 650-326-3876 FAX: 650-326-9523
Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:30pm

➢ Bowel prep materials incur a separate charge from CTVC exam (estimated cost $300). The bowel prep is rarely covered by insurance.
➢ You may choose pick-up or convenient free mail service.
➢ CTVC bowel prep prescription is non-returnable.
➢ The CT contrast agents used for this exam are not standard stock items at other pharmacies (Gastrografin).

What to know Seven (7) days before your exam:
Just like prep for a regular colonoscopy, your colon must be as empty as possible. In addition to laxatives, a CT virtual colonoscopy requires “contrast agents.” These are special materials you will drink to coat your colon. This makes the pictures clearer for the radiologist to interpret your exam. These contrast agents are essential for the exam.

1. Do not take iron pills (ferrous sulfate).
2. Do not eat foods with seeds, such as poppy, tomatoes, watermelon, or cucumbers. Do not eat celery, grapes, blueberries, corn, green peas, beans, seaweed, popcorn or, nuts.
3. (Eligibility for a same-day traditional colonoscopy if polyps are found). Consult with your physician if you are able to stop taking Plavix or Coumadin for 7 days prior to your scheduled exam. Not all same-day traditional colonoscopies will require a patient to be off Plavix or Coumadin, although it is preferred. Each case will be reviewed, and GI consulted for approval. In addition, patients must have a responsible adult driver to be eligible for a same-day traditional colonoscopy.
4. If you take insulin, the dose may need to be adjusted during your prep day and the day of the exam. Contact the doctor who manages your diabetes for instructions.
Additional bowel preparation instructions based off your medical history will be provided by the pharmacy with your bowel prep prescription.

Insurance Coverage: CT Virtual Colonoscopy (diagnostic versus screening):
A CTVC is **diagnostic** if it is a medical necessity (as documented by your referring physician). For example, it is ordered because of prior failed/incomplete colonoscopy, history of colon cancer, colon resection, or long-term history of anticoagulant therapy.

- **CTVC diagnostic exams are covered by most insurance payers, including Medicare and Tricare.**

A CTVC that is not medically necessary is a **screening** CTVC. The patient is able to have a standard colonoscopy but prefers to have a CTVC screening instead.

- Some private payers **may** cover CTVC screenings. Currently Medicare and Tricare do not cover screenings.
- Self-pay cost for eligible patients after a discount is **$1,328.60** (technical & professional fees). Pricing is subject to change without notice. For questions, please contact Patient Financial Services at (800) 549-3720, Mon – Fri, 8am - 4pm.

_Thank you for choosing Stanford Health Care Imaging Services_