

### 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 before 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, 7:30 am – 6:00 pm

Website: [stanfordhealthcare.org/imaging](https://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 your appointment date:
  - Insurance authorization will be initiated by Patient Financial Clearance (PFC)
  - Insurance authorization is only valid for 30 days
  - Rescheduled appointments may require a new authorization
- 14-21 days prior to your appointment date:
  - Insurance authorization status should be completed
- 7-14 days prior to your appointment date:
  - CTVC bowel prep prescription sent to the specialty pharmacy. The pharmacy will contact you by phone when the order is available.
  - The CTVC bowel prep prescription will only be sent to the specialty pharmacy once your insurance authorizes the CTVC exam, or Patient Financial Clearance confirms self-pay arrangements.
  - **Kaiser patients** will obtain bowel prep from a Kaiser pharmacy.

**What to know Seven (7) days before your appointment date:**

Just like prep for a traditional 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. These make the images easier to interpret and are essential for the exam.

- Do not take iron (ferrous sulfate) pills
- Do not eat foods with seeds, such as poppy, tomatoes, watermelon, and cucumbers. Do not eat celery, grapes, blueberries, corn, green peas, beans, seaweed, popcorn, or nuts.
- 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.

---

**Bowel prep is available *only* at Walgreens on Alma St., Palo Alto**

***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 (estimated cost **\$300**) from the CTVC exam.**
- **The bowel prep is rarely covered by insurance.**
- You may choose pick-up or convenient free mail service.
- **CTVC bowel prep prescription is non-refundable.**
- The CT contrast agent used for this exam (Gastrografin) is not a standard stock item at other pharmacies.

**Additional instructions, depending on your medical history, will be provided by the pharmacy with your bowel prep prescription.**

## Considerations for a same-day colonoscopy if polyps or other abnormalities are found on the CT Virtual Colonoscopy:

- If a polyp or other abnormality is found during a CT virtual colonoscopy, you may be eligible for a same day colonoscopy. However, this would depend on the order we receive from the physician who referred you to have a CT virtual colonoscopy.
- If you are a candidate for a same-day colonoscopy, you will be contacted by a registered nurse after they review your medical history and medications.
- Patients who take blood thinners will need instructions from their physician on whether it is safe to stop these medications. If you do need to stop taking your blood thinner prior to your exam, a registered nurse will contact you with instructions.
- Patients who undergo a same-day colonoscopy will receive medications to help you relax during the procedure. Arrange to have an adult drive you to your test and be there to drive and/or accompany you home after you are done. Medicines given to help you relax during your test will affect your judgment and reflexes much of the day. If you are taking a form of public transportation, an adult other than the driver **MUST** ride with you for your safety. Bring a copy of your current medicines and doses on the day of your procedure.

---

### 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 can have a traditional colonoscopy but prefers instead to have a CTVC screening.

- Some private payers **may** cover CTVC screenings. Currently, Medicare and Tricare do not cover screenings.
- The 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, 8 am - 4 pm.

***Thank you for choosing Stanford Health Care Imaging Services***