



# CT of the Lumbar Spine (no contrast)

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## Exam Information

### *Diagnostic Imaging*

#### **What is a CT lumbar spine exam?**

CT scans (sometimes called CAT scans) are specialized xray exams that produce detailed pictures of the vertebrae and vertebral discs of your low back. These scans are done using sophisticated computers to create cross-sectional images of your body.

#### **How is the exam performed?**

You will be lying on your back on a padded table. The technologist will position you for your exam using pillows if necessary to make you comfortable.

During the scan the table will move into the "donut" shaped scanner. The first scan is done quickly to help determine the exam's starting point.

The second phase of the scan has slower movement through the scanner.

#### **How should I prepare for the exam?**

*Bring a copy of the order written by your doctor.* You will also need to bring a list of your current medications.

- You may take your daily medications.
- Dress in comfortable clothes. Try to wear clothing without metal (such as belt buckles, underwire bras etc.) If this is not possible, a gown will be provided for your exam.

#### **What will I feel during the exam?**

Some patients may find it difficult to lie still for the duration of the exam due to chronic pain. Speak to your physician or to the technologist before the scan if you have concerns of this nature.

#### **Who interprets the exam and when will I get my results?**

After the exam, a radiologist who is specially trained to interpret CT exams will review your x-rays and send a written report to the physician that ordered the exam for you. That physician will then contact you with your results.