

CT Indication Guide

Do you have questions about a CT exam? We are happy to answer your questions. This document is intended only as a guideline.

Head & Brain

CT HEAD WITH CONTRAST (CPT 70460)

- Acute trauma

CTA HEAD WITH CONTRAST (CPT 70496)

- Aneurism or AVM – to define small aneurisms or for patients who can't get MRA

Note that this study is done with contrast, but this CPT code also includes non-contrast procedure

CT HEAD WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 70450)

- Acute headache
- Suspected intracranial hemorrhage
- Acute neurological changes
- Acute stroke / TIA
- Hydrocephalus
- Seizure if new onset and patient is unstable

CT HEAD WITH AND WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 70470)

- Mass
- Infection, for patients for whom MRI is contraindicated

Neck & Face

CT MAXILLOFACIAL WITH CONTRAST (CPT 70487)

- Infection

CT MAXILLOFACIAL WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 70486)

- Trauma

CTA NECK WITH CONTRAST (CPT 70460)

- Carotid or vertebral artery stenosis
- Carotid or vertebral artery dissection

Note that this study is done with contrast but also includes non-contrast procedure

CT SINUS WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 70486)

- Sinus disease

CT NECK WITH CONTRAST (CPT 70491)

- Mass
- Infection

CT TEMPORAL BONES WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 70480)

- Hearing loss or vertigo

Musculoskeletal

CT WITHOUT CONTRAST

- CPT 72128 - Thoracic trauma
- CPT 72128 - Thoracic Pain, degeneration, radiculopathy (if MRI is contraindicated)

- CPT 72131 - Lumbar trauma
- CPT 72131 - Lumbar pain, degeneration, radiculopathy, sciatica (if MRI is contraindicated)
- CPT 72192 - Sacrum, bony pelvis, hip, thigh/femur trauma, surgical hardware – CT for preoperative planning of fractures and occult fractures in younger patients

CT WITH CONTRAST

- CPT 72129 - Thoracic infection – if MRI is contraindicated
- CPT 72132 - Lumbar infection – if MRI is contraindicated

CT MYELOGRAM

1. Bill first the appropriate code for the injection:

- CPT 61055 - Cisternal or lateral cervical (C1-C2) puncture with injection of medication or other substance for diagnosis or treatment
- CPT 62284 - Injection procedure for myelography and/or computed tomography, lumbar

2. Bill for fluoroscopic guidance:

- CPT 77003 - Fluoroscopic guidance and localization of needle or catheter tip for spine or paraspinal diagnostic or therapeutic injection procedures (epidural or subarachnoid) (list separately in addition to code for primary procedure)

3. Bill for appropriate level of CT scan:

- CPT 72126 - Computed tomography, cervical spine with contrast material
- CPT 72127 - Computed tomography, cervical spine without contrast material, followed by contrast material(s) and further sections
- CPT 72129 - Computed tomography, thoracic spine with contrast material
- CPT 72130 - Computed tomography, thoracic spine, without contrast material, followed by contrast material(s) and further sections
- CPT 72132 - Computed tomography, lumbar spine, with contrast material
- CPT 72133 - Computed tomography, lumbar spine, without contrast material, followed by contrast material(s) and further sections

Extremities

(Shoulder and Humerus, Elbow, Forearm, Wrist, Hand, Finger, Knee, Calf/Tibia, Ankle / Hindfoot, Midfoot, Forefoot)

CT WITHOUT CONTRAST

UPPER EXTREMITY (CPT 73200)

LOWER EXTREMITY (CPT 73700)

- Trauma, surgical hardware – pre-operative planning and for occult fracture in younger patients
- Tarsal Coalition

CT WITH CONTRAST

UPPER EXTREMITY (CPT 73201)

LOWER EXTREMITY (CPT 73701)

CT WITH AND WITHOUT CONTRAST

UPPER EXTREMITY (CPT 73202)

LOWER EXTREMITY (CPT 73702)

CT ARTHROGRAPHY— MRI w/ & w/out Contrast (CPT Codes per chart below)

- Arthroplasty complications
- Suspected rotator cuff tear for patients who cannot have an MRI
- General pain, internal derangement of extremities

CT ARTHROGRAM CHART

Arthrogram Area	With Contrast	W/ & W/out Contrast	Contrast Injection Code
Wrist	73201	73202	25246
Elbow	73201	73202	24220
Shoulder	73201	73202	23350
Hip without Anesthesia	73701	73702	27093
Hip with Anesthesia	73701	73702	27095
Knee	73701	73702	27370
Ankle	73701	73702	27648

Chest

HIGH-RESOLUTION CHEST CT (HRCT)

- Chronic Dyspnea

Note there are no special codes for high resolution chest CT – this would be reported with 71250, 71260 or 71270 dependent upon contrast use

CHEST CT WITH CONTRAST (CPT 71260)

- Hemoptysis (if contrast is contraindicated, then chest CT without contrast)

CHEST CT WITH AND WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 71270)

- Lung cancer, noninvasive staging
- Screening for pulmonary metastases

CHEST CT WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 71250)

- Pulmonary nodules
- Acute respiratory illness (if x-ray findings are inconclusive)

CTA CHEST WITH CONTRAST (CPT 71275)

- Blunt chest trauma, suspect aortic injury
- Acute chest pain suspect aortic dissection
- Suspected pulmonary embolism – Pulmonary embolism can also be reported with CPT codes for normal CT of the chest: 71250, 71260, 71270

Note that this study is done with contrast, but also includes the non-contrast study

LOW DOSE CHEST CT FOR LUNG CANCER SCREENING OF CURRENT AND FORMER SMOKERS (CPT G0297)

- No contrast is used
- All the following must be met for most payors, including Medicare:
 1. Age 55 - 77 years
 2. Asymptomatic (no signs or symptoms of lung cancer)
 3. Tobacco smoking history of at least 30 pack-years (one pack-year = smoking one pack per day for one year; 1 pack = 20 cigarettes)
 4. Current smoker or one who has quit smoking within the last 15 years
 5. A written order for lung cancer screening with LDCT
 6. A counseling and shared decision making visit, including the use of one or more decision aids (e.g. EMMI, Option Aid), to include benefits and harms of screening, follow-up diagnostic testing, over-diagnosis, false positive rate, and total radiation exposure

Gastrointestinal

CT ABDOMEN AND PELVIS WITH CONTRAST (CPT 74177)

- Acute abdominal pain
- Left lower quadrant pain or right lower quadrant pain suspected appendicitis
- Palpable abdominal mass
- Suspected liver metastases
- Blunt trauma, stable patient

CT ENTEROGRAPHY

- Crohn's disease (MRI for known pediatric disease to avoid repetitive CT radiation exposure)
- CPT Code depends upon how the study is completed, either with, without, or with and without contrast: 7416, 74177, 74178

COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING – CT colonography every 5 years after negative screen (CPT 74263)

CT PANCREAS PROTOCOL WITH CONTRAST (CPT 74160)

- Jaundice, painless

CT OF THE ABDOMEN WITH IV CONTRAST (CPT 74160)

- Suspected small bowel obstruction (only if high grade or complete obstruction)

Urology

CT ABDOMEN AND PELVIS WITHOUT CONTRAST (CTKUB) (CPT 74176)

- Flank pain, suspected stone disease
- Incidental adrenal mass – (if indeterminate, then CT without and with contrast)

CT ABDOMEN AND PELVIS WITHOUT AND WITH CONTRAST (CPT 74178)

- Acute pyelonephritis
- Hematuria (Order as CT-IVP which includes high resolution excretory phase imaging of the renal collecting systems and ureters)

- Incidental renal mass
- Recurrent urinary tract infections in women – (for bladder and kidneys evaluation)

CT ABDOMEN AND PELVIS WITH CONTRAST (CPT 74177)

- Bladder cancer follow-up
- Prostate cancer post-treatment, rising PSA levels
- Renal trauma

RENAL ARTERY CTA WITH CONTRAST (CPT 74175)

- Renovascular hypertension

Note the CPT code for this study is done with contrast, but also includes the non-contrast study

CT CYSTOGRAM

- Suspect lower urinary tract trauma
- CPT Code assignment is based on the area scanned. If the kidneys are imaged, then you would bill abdomen (74150, 74160, or 74170). If the bladder is imaged, you would bill the CT pelvis codes (72192, 72193, 72194). If you imaged both, then it would be the CT abdomen and pelvis combined codes (74176, 74177, 74178).

Vascular Imaging

CT ABDOMEN AND PELVIS WITHOUT CONTRAST (CPT 71275)

- Known aortic abdominal aortic aneurism, treatment planning

Note that the study for this CPT code is done with contrast, but also includes the non-contrast procedure

CTA CHEST WITH CONTRAST (CPT 71275)

- Aortic injury suspected

Note that the study for this CPT code is done with contrast, but also includes the non-contrast procedure

CT VENOGRAPHY WITH CONTRAST (CPT 71275 (chest), CPT 74175 (abdomen), CPT 72191 (pelvis))

- Pelvic vein or central chest vein thrombosis

CT ABDOMEN WITH CONTRAST (CPT 74160)

- Upper GI bleeding with negative endoscopy

Pre-exam lab work may be required for contrasted CT exams.

You are not required to order exams based on the information in this guide. You should order the most appropriate exam based on your patient's symptoms and diagnosis.

To schedule a patient:

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