

Cardiac Imaging Services at Hillcroft Medical Clinic

Calcium-Score Screening Heart Scan

Facts about heart disease:

- 58 million of USA population has one or more forms of cardiovascular disease.
- Heart disease or Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the number one killer of men and women in USA.
- More population of USA die of heart disease, than all types of cancer combined.
- At least 250,000 people a year die of heart attack with in one hour of the onset of symptoms and before they reach a hospital.
- 12 million people alive today have a history of heart attack, chest pain or both.

What is Calcium-Score Screening Heart Scan?

The goal of Cardiac Calcium Screening is to determine if Coronary artery disease is present and to what extent, even if there are no symptoms. It is a screening study that may be recommended by physicians with the risk factors for heart disease or coronary artery disease but no symptoms.

Cardiac calcium scoring uses few minutes of quick CT scan with electrocardiogram monitoring to check for the build up of Calcium in plaques on the walls of the arteries of the heart (coronary arteries). The cardiac calcium scoring is used to check heart disease in an early stage and to determine how severe it is. Coronary arteries which supply blood to the heart normally do not contain calcium. Calcium in the coronary arteries is a sign of coronary artery disease (CAD).

Cardiac calcium scoring is not done very often because a physical examination & other tests often give enough information about your heart. But if you are at medium risk for CAD based on your risk factors, cardiac calcium scoring may give your physician more information to decide on your risk of CAD. Medium risk means that you have 10% - 20% chance of having a heart attack in the next 10 years, based on your risk factors. You can be at medium risk and not have any symptoms of heart disease.

If your physician thinks that results from "Calcium-Score Screening Heart Scan" could change your treatment for heart disease, your physician may advice this test for you.

What are the risk factors for heart disease / Coronary artery disease?

- Family history or personal history of heart disease / coronary artery disease
- Male over 45 years of age and Female over 55 years of age.
- High blood cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Past or present history of smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- High stress levels
- Being physically inactive

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What causes heart disease / coronary artery disease?

The primary cause of heart disease is the build up of plaque (atherosclerosis) in the arteries of the heart. This build-up can cause the arteries to narrow. Plaque can also break away from the artery walls and cause a blockage. In both instances the heart muscle does not receive enough blood flow and oxygen-thus a heart attack can occur.

What is Cardiac calcium scoring?

Cardiac calcium scoring is a revolutionary, pain-free, non-invasive and inexpensive procedure requiring 10-20 minutes. Using CT imaging with sub-second scanning capability, the equipment takes 70-90 images of your heart arteries and coronary arteries with out any injections, needles. The amount of calcium or plaque detected in coronary arteries is used to establish your cardiac calcium score.

The extent of CAD (coronary artery disease) is graded according to your Cardiac calcium score.

Cardiac calcium scoring	
Score	Presence of plaque
0	No plaque is present. You have less than a 5% chance of having heart disease . Your risk of a heart attack is very low.
1-10	A small amount of plaque is present. You have less than a 10% chance of having heart disease. Your risk of a heart attack is low. But you may want to quit smoking , eat better, and exercise more.
11-100	Plaque is present. You have mild heart disease. Your chance of having a heart attack is moderate. Talk with your doctor about quitting smoking , eating better, beginning an exercise program , and any other treatment you may need.
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 to do more tests and may start treatment for heart disease. Or he or she may start you on aggressive treatment for any risk factors such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol .
Over 400	A large amount of plaque is present. You have more than a 90% chance that plaque is blocking your arteries. Your chance of having a heart attack is high. Your doctor will want to do more tests and will start treatment.

What does the procedure involve?

- First the patient completes the history sheet questionnaire. Next, patient lie down on the imaging table while CT Technologist places a few EKG leads on you.

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- You are then asked to hold your breath for few seconds while the images are taken. The procedure is finished, you can return to your regular routine.
- A well qualified board certified cardiologist, using high tech software and advanced work station, calculate your cardiac calcium score based on the images taken.
- The report will be provided with evaluation to your ordering physician with in 24 hours.
- The cardiac calcium scoring is safe and simple. In most cases (unless there are certain types of buttons or bra metal involved), patient may keep their shirt or blouse on during the procedure.
- Please tell your physician and CT technologist if you are pregnant. This test is not recommended in pregnancy.
- Please avoid smoking & caffeine use four –six hours prior to test.
- Fast heart rate may affect the test. If the heart rate 90 or more beats per minute, the test may need to be rescheduled.

What can my cardiac calcium score tell me and my physician?

- Subtle early warning signs of heart disease can be detected.
- Cardiac calcium scoring is the latest diagnostic tool to detect plaque in the coronary arteries.
- With this information, your physician can recommend the appropriate treatment, including diet and life style changes, medication and/or further testing for healthy heart.
- Detect the build-up plaque earlier than any other technology (such as stress test)
- Help you physician develop the appropriate prevention strategy for you.
- Reduce the need for other, more expensive and invasive tests.
- Give you peace of mind & stress free life.

Is coronary artery disease treatable?

- Yes, the plaque build-up process can be slowed, stabilized & reversed.
- In some cases, through aggressive life style modification and/or through medication therapies under the guidance of your physician.

Why choose Cardiac calcium scoring at Hillcroft Medical Clinic, Houston, Texas.

- Hillcroft Medical Clinic is a multi-specialty clinic with primary care physicians & specialty physicians. We are the out patient facility with state of the art department of medical imaging accredited with American College of Radiology.
- We provide state of the art cardiology services including Echocardiogram, Stress testing with dual head Gamma Camera & Calcium-Score Screening Heart Scan supervised by board certified cardiologist.
- As an “Ambulatory care center” you can be assured of receiving the quality of care that has been a tradition since 1948 in southwest part of greater Houston, Texas.
- For more information about Hillcroft Medical Clinic, please visit our website:
www.hillcroftmed.com

Schedule your appointment to learn your Cardiac calcium score.

Call: 713. 781.4600 / 713.917.5776