



CCTA - Coronary Computed Tomography Angiography

Traditionally, doctors have ordered stress tests to determine if a narrowing of a heart artery is preventing normal blood flow to the heart muscle. Though stress tests are useful, recent studies have shown that most heart attacks occur from heart vessels that have non-obstructive plaque that becomes unstable. This type of plaque can be missed by stress testing.

CCTA is a noninvasive test that can accurately assess the presence or absence of coronary (heart) artery plaque. If your heart arteries show no sign of plaque, then that is a strong reassurance that you do not have coronary artery disease and are at a very low risk of a future heart attack. A stress test cannot provide that reassurance. If plaque is present, then the CCTA can determine if there is any narrowing of the heart artery.

The presence and extent of coronary plaque can help guide treatment options. The recently published SCOT-HEART Trial compared management guided by usual care which typically included a stress test to a group of patients whose management was guided by the findings from having a CCTA. At the 5-year follow-up there was a 40% decrease in death and non-fatal heart attacks in the CCTA group. The improved outcome in the CCTA group was driven by CCTA's ability to document the presence of nonobstructive coronary artery disease which leads to more aggressive control of risk factors along with the increased use of preventive medications. Again, pointing out that stress tests cannot document the presence of nonobstructive plaque, and that treating atherosclerosis improves outcomes.

This is a test that may be right for you but does involve radiation exposure and the use of contrast dye, so is not the right test for everyone. It is covered by insurance companies for certain indications but is not often covered as a screening test.

Talk to your physician about your heart disease risk.

Risk factors



70% who suffer a heart attack will have a normal cholesterol

Symptoms

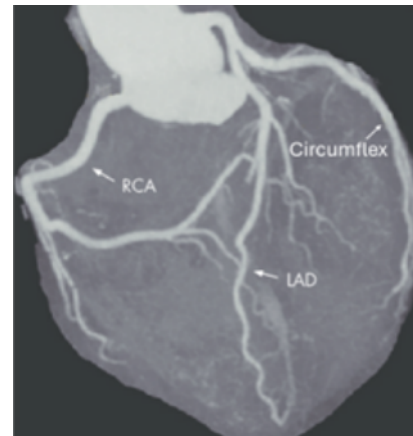


60% of heart attack victims feel no symptoms before the event

Stress tests



75% of heart attack lesions would be missed by stress testing



*CCTA: Normal Heart Arteries

1. CCTA can diagnose the presence of even the smallest amount of calcified and non-calcified plaque, allowing for early preventive management.
2. Though coronary calcium scoring is a good screening test, CCTA can diagnose narrowing of a heart artery, define high risk plaque features and can track the response to medical therapy which can help further guide management. It is recommended to talk to your physician about what option is best for you.
3. CCTA is superior to stress testing in determining which patients would benefit from a referral for cardiac catheterization.



Preferred Health Partners

Administrative Updates

Please welcome our newest physicians - **Dr. Stephen Johnston** (Cardiology) at our Park Cities office, and **Dr. Shailendra Chavda** (Internal Medicine) at our Las Colinas office. Both physicians are accepting new patients. Patients may find a list of all Preferred Health Partner physicians accepting new patients by visiting ntphp.com/accepting-new-patients.html

Healthy Habits:

Roasted Red Pepper and Butternut Squash Soup

Adapted from: Caro Chambers

Ingredients

- 1 head of garlic, kept whole with top cut off
- 2 red bell peppers, deseeded and chopped into large pieces
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and chopped into large pieces
- 1 cup (8 ounces) butternut squash cubes (~1 small butternut squash)
- 4 to 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, depending on spice preference
- 2 teaspoons of smoked paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 slices of a good loaf of bread (any type — country levain, sourdough, ciabatta, etc.)
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, plus more for serving
- 2 cups vegetable broth, divided
- 1 can white beans, drained
- 1/4 cup of sour cream
- Crumbled feta, for serving

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.
3. To the sheet pan, place the garlic bulb cut-side down on the sheet pan along with the bell peppers, onions and butternut squash, then add 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, 2 teaspoons smoked paprika, 1/2 teaspoon thyme leaves, and salt and pepper to taste. Use your hands to coat all the veggies and the garlic bulb thoroughly with the EVOO and spices.
4. Roast for 20 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, cube 4 slices of bread. After the veggies have roasted for 20 minutes, take the sheet pan out of the oven, move the veggies over to one side, and add the cubed bread to one side of the sheet pan. Toss the bread with 1 to 2 tablespoons EVOO. Return the baking sheet to the oven and roast for 20 to 25 minutes, until the veggies are soft and starting to caramelize and the croutons are toasty.
6. Remove the sheet pan from the oven and let the veggies cool slightly, until the garlic bulb is cool enough to handle. Remove the croutons, setting them aside until you serve the soup.
7. Squeeze half of the roasted garlic into a blender. Reserve the other half of the roasted garlic for another use.
8. Add the other veggies to the blender along with 1 cup of vegetable broth and 1 can of drained white beans. Blend until smooth.
9. Place the blended soup in a saucepan over medium heat. Add 1 cup of broth. Once the soup is heated through, remove the saucepan from heat and stir in 1/4 cup sour cream.
10. Serve topped with crispy croutons, crumbled feta, a drizzle of EVOO, and a few thyme leaves. Enjoy!

Locations

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Dallas - Junius

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