

# VMC–Dublin Outpatient CT Imaging: Client Information & Sedation/Anesthesia/Contrast Risks

This handout explains what to expect during your pet's outpatient CT imaging appointment, including the use of sedation/anesthesia and, when applicable, intravenous contrast media.

## What Is a CT Scan?

Computed Tomography (CT) is an advanced imaging technique that uses X-rays to create detailed images of internal structures. CT scans help veterinarians diagnose conditions that cannot be fully evaluated with standard X-rays.

## Sedation & Anesthesia for CT Imaging

Most pets require sedation, or in some cases general anesthesia, for CT imaging to ensure comfort, safety, and optimal image quality. Sedation or anesthesia allows your pet to remain still during the scan and helps reduce stress.

The decision to use sedation versus general anesthesia is based on a review of the medical record, the area being studied, and the anticipated length of the procedure. Patients who are not considered stable for the procedure will be referred back to the referring veterinarian to discuss alternative options, which may include specialty referral through the VMC–Columbus location.

### Potential Risks of Sedation and Anesthesia

Sedation and general anesthesia are generally very safe for stable patients; however, potential risks may include:

- Changes in heart rate or blood pressure
- Slow or shallow breathing
- Prolonged recovery time or grogginess
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rare allergic or adverse drug reactions
- Very rarely, serious complications including death

Your pet will be evaluated by a licensed Veterinarian prior to sedation/anesthesia and closely monitored during, and after the procedure by a licensed Veterinary Technician under the direct supervision of the Veterinarian.

## Use of Intravenous Contrast Media

Some CT studies require intravenous contrast media to improve visualization of organs and blood vessels. The use of contrast is determined based on the diagnostic request from your referring veterinarian.

### Potential Risks of Contrast Media

Most pets tolerate contrast well, but possible risks include:

- Mild nausea or vomiting
- Temporary blood pressure changes
- Injection site irritation
- Allergic-type reactions (rare)
- Effects on kidney function, particularly in pets with kidney disease

Please inform the veterinarian if your pet has kidney disease, prior reactions to contrast agents or other significant medical conditions.

## After the Appointment

After imaging, your pet will recover from sedation/anesthesia under supervision and will be discharged once stable. Mild sleepiness may persist for the remainder of the day. A diagnostic report will be sent to your referring veterinarian, who will discuss results with you and provide all follow up care.