

SANFORDTM

HEALTH

Dear Colleague:

There has been considerable attention drawn to a new heart-scanning technique known as cardiac CTA utilizing the 64-slice CT scanner. The images of the heart and coronary arteries are very good and this test has very high negative predictive value (~98%) meaning if the study is negative, it is truly negative.

The application of the new technology is expanding. Ideal candidates include:

- Patients with acute chest pain with normal ECG (or non-specific abnormalities) and normal enzymes
- Patients with inconclusive stress tests
- Preoperative evaluation of certain patients undergoing cardiac valve surgery
- Cardiomyopathy patients to exclude coronary disease and various other cardiac indications.

When the results show normal coronary arteries, the test is a very powerful tool.

The risks of this technology include radiation and contrast exposure. The amount of contrast is about the same as used during a coronary angiogram, but the radiation exposure exceeds that of a coronary angiogram. However, the overall risk of the procedure is significantly lower than that of an angiogram. Patients do need to be in sinus rhythm and will probably receive beta blockers/calcium channel blockers to slow their heart rate. The best chance of an ideal study is when the patient has a slow (50-60/min), regular heart beat. Currently the studies are done during the week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

An issue that must be addressed prior to ordering the test is reimbursement. The study is reimbursable with the proper indications. We pre-certify all patients who have the test ordered using information gathered on the enclosed forms. Our pre-certification specialist, Jennifer Scheet, is available at (701) 234-5067 to answer your questions and help with the process.

If you feel you have a patient who is a candidate and would like to order a coronary CTA, please contact Jennifer Scheet and/or fax the enclosed forms to her at (701) 234-7133. We will get the results back to you promptly and are available for any questions you may have regarding the study.

Sincerely yours,

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