

Carotid Ultrasound



What is a Carotid Ultrasound?

Ultrasound imaging or sonography uses sound waves to produce pictures of the inside of the body. Ultrasound exams do not use radiation. Ultrasound images are captured in real-time so they can show the structure and movement of the body's internal organs, as well as blood flowing through blood vessels. This exam looks at the carotid arteries located on either side of the neck. It is almost always performed bilaterally.

CPT Code

93880 bilateral

93882 unilateral

Indications

stenosis, hematoma, dissection, high blood pressure, carotid bruit, follow-up screening exam

Contraindications

none

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

No preparation is required prior to the exam.

What Happens During the Test?

Our technologist will obtain a medical history. Your patient will be scanned lying down on his back. The technician will apply a clear gel to the neck to evaluate the arteries.

The sonographer (ultrasound technologist) or radiologist then presses the transducer against the skin and sweeps it back and forth over the neck. The exam measures and analyzes blood flow patterns in the carotid arteries.

The transducer is a small hand-held device that resembles a microphone, attached to an ultrasound machine by a cord. The images are readily available to the technologist. The exam takes approximately 60 minutes to complete.

After the Test

After the exam the gel is wiped off. Your patient may resume normal activities.

The Results

A radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to the referring physician within 1 business day.

(Information adapted from www.radiologyinfo.org and Dr. Jill Westercamp)

This manual is intended for use as merely a guideline for referring physicians and their staff only. It contains information pertaining to the most commonly ordered exams and indications. However, Iowa Radiology does not recommend any particular examination. Individual radiologist preference or patient circumstances may dictate ordering alternative studies. Although contrast codes are not needed to place an order, the following contrast codes may be used in placing orders: CT Contrast Q9967, MRI contrast A9577 and A9579.