FAUQUIER HEALTH

Keeping your heart healthy: Cardiac calcium scoring

A coronary artery calcium (CAC) test is a safe, painless way for doctors to detect potential heart problems in advance. The results allow your doctor to calculate your risk of heart attack and detect early blockage and plaque build up. This gives you the opportunity to make lifestyle changes that can help prevent or minimize the advancement of heart disease.

How does the test work?

- The test measures the amount of calcium that has built up in your coronary arteries
- It does not require any needles or other invasive measures
- There are no preparations or medication changes
- You can resume all normal activities immediately afterward

Results are recorded as a numeric score. The higher your score, the more calcium you have. A zero score means you have no calcium and are at low risk of having a heart attack in the next several years.

Because the test does involve a modest amount of radiation exposure, the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology do not recommend the test for everyone, just for those at risk.

Am I eligible for a cardiac calcium scoring test?

To be eligible, you must meet this age requirement…

- Man, age 40+
- Woman, age 50+

…and have one or more additional risk factors:

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Smoker
- High cholesterol
- BMI > 30
- Family health history of premature cardiovascular heart disease (prior to age 55 in males and prior to age 65 in females)

Watch this quick video to learn more.

The cost for the test is $99, and it must be paid at the time of the exam.

A referral from a provider is required. Once you have physician order, call **540.316.5800** to schedule your test. The patient must provide contact information of their provider in order to share test results.