

## CT Scans

10/29/2017

Here are some common reasons to order a CT scan and **how the scan should be ordered!**

- 1) **CT head w/o contrast** = THE CT for heads
  - No contrast allows you to look for blood
  - *Stroke* = r/o bleed; *trauma* = r/o hematoma; *new sudden onset HA* = r/o subarachnoid hemorrhage; *old/alcoholic with minor trauma* = r/o subdural hematoma
- 2) **CT C-Spine w/o contrast**
  - Rule out bone injury when trauma especially if they don't pass the NEXUS criteria
  - Do in traumatic neck pain to look for fractures
- 3) **CTA Chest with contrast** = THE CT for chest
  - Often looking at vasculature
  - *Trauma (aortic injury/ribs/lungs), PE, dissection*
- 4) **CT Abdomen/pelvis with contrast** (IV contrast, not oral!)
  - *Trauma, acute abdomen* (appendicitis, diverticulitis, bowel obstruction)
- 5) **CT Abdomen/pelvis w/o contrast** = **KIDNEY STONES**
  - Calcified stone is the only bright thing you see!

## Quick Facts

- NEXUS criteria for low probability of C-Spine injury: no midline tenderness, no neuro deficit, normal alertness, not intoxicated, no painful distracting injury.
- Consider **maxillofacial CT w/o contrast** in the setting of serious facial trauma
- Consider **CTA neck with contrast in setting of concern for vascular injury** (close line/seatbelt injury or penetrating neck injury)
- With better imaging resolution, contrast is being needed less. Don't be surprised if you see orders for abdomen/pelvis without contrast!
- We used to have to use oral contrast for abdominal CTs, but don't need to as often now due to better resolution. This saves us a lot of time!