



# Health Care Forum

ASK THE MEDICAL EXPERTS

## What's your Heart Score?

Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States. One in every four adult Americans has some form of heart disease. More than 500,000 deaths result from it each year. Over half of those patients will have no previous symptoms.

The first step is determining if you or someone you love are at risk. The good news is that 85% of heart disease can be halted or prevented if the conditions that lead to heart attacks are diagnosed early enough. Windsong Radiology Group, led by Janet Sung, M.D., is now offering a breakthrough diagnostic program called Cardiac Scoring.

According to Dr. Sung, "cardiac scoring or calcium scoring, as some call it, allows us to determine the amount of calcium plaque, if any, in the coronary arteries. It's performed with a high-speed CT scanner, so it's completely non-invasive and painless." Cardiac scoring typically takes about 20 minutes to perform, and there is no preparation.

Prevention begins with awareness. Calcified plaque can build up in the arteries, causing what is commonly known as hardening of the arteries. As more plaque clings to the artery walls, they get narrower and the risk of sudden heart attack grows each day. Cardiac scoring not only allows early diagnosis of coronary artery disease but also scores the severity of it.

Windsong Radiology's team of dedicated

radiologists utilizes a high-speed CT scanner to identify abnormalities within the arteries leading to the heart. "If no calcium plaque is detected, patients probably do not have coronary artery disease, and their risk of sudden heart attack is that much less," says Dr. Sung. "Of course they still need to work to reduce other risk factors by eating right, exercising regularly and avoid smoking."

Who can benefit? At risk individuals interested in preventative care. The most likely candidates are:

- Men between the ages of 40 to 75
- Women between the ages of 45 to 75
- Anyone with a family history of heart disease
- Patients suffering with obesity, diabetes, high cholesterol or high blood pressure
- Smokers

While the benefit of early detection and treatment outweighs the risks, most insurance carriers have not yet approved this process for reimbursement. "We've pioneered a number of new procedures in the area, and we are always looking to improve our services to the community. Windsong will continue to provide the education needed to bring this screening test into mainstream" adds Dr. Sung.

For more information on cardiac scoring or other new technologies at Windsong Radiology Group, please call (716) 631-2500 ext. 140 or visit [www.windsongradiology.com](http://www.windsongradiology.com).

**By: Thomas Summers, M.D.**



## Imaging Experts

**Do I receive any injections during this examination? Will I be able to drive home following the examination?**

The examination requires no preparation. It is a painless and noninvasive high definition CT scan examination. No medications or injections are administered and there are no restrictions on patients following the examination.

**How do I find out about the results of the examination?**

You will be provided with the results of your examination before you leave our office. Your physician will also receive the results of the examination. Any questions regarding treatment and lifestyle modifications which may be suggested based on the results of your exam should be discussed with your primary physician and/or cardiologist.

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Additional questions may be  
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