Mr. Foster, can you please explain what makes a CT scan different from other medical imaging tests?

A. A CT scan is a noninvasive, high-tech medical imaging test using radiation that can help physicians diagnose many types of diseases. It is very similar to an x-ray, but instead of looking through the body from front to back or side to side, the scan visualizes slices of the body. Think of it as a sliced loaf of bread. If you pulled out one slice from the middle, you would see a two-dimensional cross section of the bread, just as a CT scan image is a two-dimensional, visual cross section of the part of your body the physician needs to study. It is very, very accurate.

What is a contrast agent?

A. It is a substance that will visually enhance the distinctions between body parts for a number of conditions.

How does a contrast agent help in the imaging process?

A. A radiologist needs to be able to differentiate certain organs that might look the same on a regular CT scan. For instance, two organs of the same density right next to each other will look the same on the CT scan. However, contrast placed in one organ will make it look completely different from the other, so the doctor can see the organ in question and make the proper diagnosis.

What are some of the symptoms or conditions for which a CT scan with contrast is needed?

A. Contrast helps radiologists identify cancers of the colon and liver – it enables them to see tumors within the stomach and the small and large bowel. It also helps delineate perforations very well. Let me give you an example. If a person had a perforation and the image was taken without contrast, the hole may not be perceptible. However, with contrast, the radiologist would see that the contrast was leaking out so they would be able to see the perforation and know exactly where it was.

It’s also very helpful for identifying appendicitis in children. A child who comes to the emergency with a right lower quadrant abdominal pain would likely get an imaging test from the appendix. With contrast, you could see that the contrast was leaking out and that you would realize it was extremely bitter, they are very difficult for patients to get down, which can result in less complete imaging studies.

Why is it important to make a contrast agent taste better?

A. Patients often report that drinking an oral contrast agent is the most dreaded part of the radiology experience. Because some contrast agents are iodine based and because that iodine tastes extremely bitter, they are very difficult for patients to get down, which can result in less complete imaging studies.

What is that exactly?

A. In the past, patients would be served several Syrstaro cups of contrast. As soon as they took the first sip, they would realize it was extremely bitter. Some patients would require a lot of coaching by a tech coming out into the wait room many times and urging them to drink it. Other patients would stop after two or three cups. When there isn’t contrast throughout the entire GI tract, radiologists may not be able to see what they need to see.

Why does having Breeza help the medicine go down?

Because the patient can see the organ in question and make the proper diagnosis.

Are there other professional drinks on the market that offer the benefits of Breeza and help increase patient satisfaction?

No, there are no other professional drinks on the market like Breeza. In the past, CT scan techs would realize it was extremely bitter.

Is there any further information about Breeza?

Yes. For one, Florida Hospital Waterman, a 209-bed, acute-care facility that gives Lake County residents access to state-of-the-art technology. Florida Hospital Waterman is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO), and is focused on the challenging goal of continuously raising its quality standards to higher levels. In 2012, the Orlando Sentinel ranked Florida Hospital Waterman 10th in the region’s top 100 family-friendly companies. This interview with Richard Foster was conducted by Kris Klime, editorial manager for Florida Health Care News.

Florida Hospital Waterman is located at 1000 Waterman Way in Tavares, approximately 15 miles northwest of Orlando. For more information, please phone (352) 533-3333.

For more information on Breeza, please visit www.beekeley.com.