

FACILITY: Reading Hospital	
MANUAL: Department of Radiology	FOLDER: General
TITLE: Imaging Pregnant Patients	DOCUMENT OWNER: All Managers
DOCUMENT ADMINISTRATOR: Administrative Director and Department Chair	KEYWORDS: Imaging, pregnant
ORIGINAL DATE: 1/2014	REVISION DATE(S): 8/21/18, 8/21/20, 9/30/2021

SCOPE:
Department of Radiology

PURPOSE:
To ensure patient safety, all females between the ages of 18 to 55 years of age will be interviewed by the technologist as to the possibility of pregnancy before any radiologic procedure is performed.

To provide an established guideline when requested to image a known or potentially pregnant patient.

POLICY:
Imaging procedures will be performed during pregnancy to address important clinical problems. The criticality of the patient negates imaging constraints and the mother's care takes precedence.

A risk versus benefit analysis should be conducted to determine whether the requested examination could safely wait until the end of the pregnancy.

- The final decision to proceed must reside with the attending physician, in consultation with the radiologist when such services are utilized. That is, the attending physician must retain full and complete discretion to decide each case according to their judgment. Only they should determine when need for these diagnostic studies transcends the involved risk.

DEFINITIONS:
MRI – Magnetic Resonance Imaging
CT – Computed Tomography

PROCEDURE:
Guidelines provided for specific modality imaging processes.

Nuclear Medicine

Follow Nuclear Medicine Specific Policies to Imaging and Pregnancy
Imaging Pregnant Patients

CT & X-Ray Imaging

A. Imaging: Known Pregnant Patient

Direct Fetal Imaging

1. Patient Education must occur.

A patient education form is available (RH4745 10.21 & RH4745S 10.21) to inform the patient of the imaging examination using ionizing radiation. The patient education form and information communicated with the patient accurately communicates the benefits and risks posed by the procedure, in language understandable to the layman. The education form does not require signature.

2. Written consent must be obtained when direct imaging of the fetus will occur.

- Written Consent is required when the fetus will be directly imaged. The organizational Consent for Procedure RH 3541 should be utilized.
 - **Outpatients** – The *radiologist* is responsible for obtaining written consent.
 - **Inpatients**- The *ordering physician* is responsible for obtaining written consent.
 - **ED Patients**- The *ED physician* is responsible for obtaining written consent.

Indirect Fetal Imaging

Indirect imaging is not a concern as negligible radiation exposure is expected

1. Continue with imaging.
2. Chest X-ray perform a PA chest only

During the screening process, if the patient states “unsure of pregnancy” status and is not on birth control or beyond 30 days of cycle.

Direct Fetal Imaging

1. Pause and consult with Radiologist

Indirect Imaging

2. Continue with imaging

Reading Hospital

GUIDELINE:

PROVIDER PROTOCOL:

EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

REFERENCES:

ACR Practice Guidelines for Imaging Pregnant or Potentially Pregnant Adolescents and Women with Ionizing Radiation

How Radiation from a Pelvic X-Ray or CT Scan May Affect Your Unborn Child RH4745 & RH4745S

COMMITTEE/COUNCIL APPROVALS:

Department of Radiology, Chair; Department of Radiology, Administrative Director; Department of Radiology, Operations Manager; Department of Radiology

CANCELLATION:

The content of this document supersedes all previous policies/procedures/protocols/guidelines, memoranda, and/or other communications pertaining to this document.

Reading Hospital
420 S. Fifth Ave, West Reading, PA 19611-2143

How Radiation from a Pelvic X-Ray or CT Scan May Affect Your Unborn Child

Radiology

Your doctor has ordered an x-ray exam or a CT scan of your belly area to better understand your pain or discomfort. Both of these exams produce a picture of your insides. This picture is formed by x-ray radiation passing through your body.

Every year, all of us are exposed to background radiation from the sky, soil, and other sources. An x-ray exam of your belly area gives very little radiation dose to your fetus (baby). It is equal to about a year's worth of background radiation. Most standard x-ray exams of the abdomen and pelvis are not likely to pose any risk to your baby.

A CT scan of the abdomen (belly) and pelvis has been ordered. This scan forms a more detailed and useful picture but gives about 10 times more radiation dose to the fetus than a standard x-ray exam. It is important to know that the risk of serious harm to the fetus remains very small.

CT scans are an acceptable exam to have during pregnancy, when your doctor considers it important to determine your plan for future medical care. Remember that **your** health is important to the health of your baby.

Radiation given to the fetus from other imaging procedures can add to this risk. So, you should tell your doctor if:

- You had imaging exams done elsewhere.
- You will have studies done elsewhere in the future.

The radiation dose to the fetus from CT scans to other parts of your body, such as your head or lungs, is much smaller.

So, although there may be a very small risk to your fetus, your doctor has estimated that the benefit to you is greater than the risk

RH4745 Revised 10.21

Cómo la radiación de una radiografía pélvica o una tomografía computada pueden afectar a su bebé en gestación

Radiologa

Su médico ha solicitado una radiografía o una tomografía computada de la zona del vientre para entender mejor su dolor o molestia. Ambos exámenes ofrecen imágenes de su interior. Estas imágenes requieren que la radiación atraviese su cuerpo.

Cada año, todos estamos expuestos a la radiación de fondo del cielo, el suelo y otras fuentes. Un examen de rayos X del área de su abdomen le da muy poca dosis de radiación a su feto (bebé). Es igual a aproximadamente un año de radiación de fondo. Es poco probable que la mayoría de los exámenes radiográficos estándar del abdomen y la pelvis representen ningún riesgo para su bebé.

Se ordenó una tomografía computarizada del abdomen (vientre) y la pelvis. Esta tomografía brinda una imagen más detallada y útil, pero le aporta casi 10 veces más radiación al feto que una radiografía estándar. Es importante saber que el riesgo de daños graves al feto sigue siendo muy pequeño.

Las tomografías computadas son aceptables durante el embarazo cuando su médico considera importante determinar su plan para la futura atención médica. Recuerde que **su** salud es importante para la salud del bebé.

La radiación que recibe el feto de otros procedimientos de diagnóstico por imágenes puede acumularse a este riesgo. En consecuencia, debe informar a su médico si:

- ya se ha realizado estudios por imágenes en otros centros;
- se realizará estudios por imágenes en otros centros en el futuro.

La dosis de radiación que recibe el feto cuando se hacen tomografías computadas de otras partes del cuerpo, como la cabeza o los pulmones, es mucho menor.

Por ende, a pesar de que puede haber un riesgo muy pequeño para su feto, su médico ha considerado que el beneficio para usted es superior a ese riesgo.