

Where is the Lead Apron?

Why Reproductive Organ Shielding is No Longer Recommended



You may notice that we no longer shield patients' reproductive organs during imaging exams. Based on over 70 years of research, medical experts now know that the best way to keep

patients safe during imaging exams is to not use shields. This is true at any age, including for those who plan to have children in the future. We know this is different from how things have been done for a long time.

Background

In the 1950s, medical experts had less knowledge about how x-ray radiation used in medical imaging affected our bodies. One concern was that the radiation might damage cells that could be passed along to future generations. Because of this concern, lead shields were often placed over patients' reproductive organs during medical imaging exams. We now know that the best way to safely image you is to not use shields.

Better technology means that today's medical imaging equipment can make high-quality images using only very small amounts of radiation.

Scientists found that the gonads are much less sensitive to radiation than previously thought. This is true for everyone, including children and adults who plan to have children in the future. Shields can cover up parts of the body that your doctor needs to see. If this happens, then the exam may need to be repeated.

Shields can interfere with other dose-saving features. X-ray equipment includes technology that makes sure just the right amount of radiation is used for the exam. Sometimes a shield can interfere with this technology, which can increase the amount of radiation from the exam.

Source

National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements:
ncrponline.org/publications/statements



The amount of radiation used in medical imaging has decreased by over 95% since the 1950s.



Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about your imaging exam, please reach out to your radiologic technologist or doctor.

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