
RSNA Press Release

Image Wisely™ Initiative to Help Providers Reduce Radiation Dose Adults Receive From Medical Imaging Scans

Released: November 29, 2010

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Washington, DC — As medical imaging exams have replaced more invasive procedures, benefiting patients and revolutionizing medicine, people's exposure to medical radiation has increased. Imaging providers are concerned that radiation exposure over time could have adverse effects for patients. They continue to act to ensure that patients receive only necessary scans and to reduce radiation dose used in these exams.

Image Wisely™ (www.imagewisely.org), a collaborative initiative of the American College of Radiology (ACR), the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA), the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT), and the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM), encourages imaging providers to:



- Optimize imaging examinations to use only the radiation necessary to produce diagnostic quality images
- Convey the principles of the Image Wisely Program to the imaging team in order to ensure that the facility optimizes its use of radiation when imaging patients
- Communicate optimal patient imaging strategies to referring physicians, and be available for consultation
- Routinely review imaging protocols to ensure the use of the least amount of radiation necessary to acquire a diagnostic quality image for each exam

Image Wisely also urges providers to demonstrate to patients that they "image wisely" by:

- Taking the Image Wisely pledge
- Getting accredited by the ACR or equivalent accrediting organization

- Participating in a Dose Index Registry

"As the stewards of nearly 100 years of radiology safety knowledge, radiologists are committed to ensuring that patients receive safe, necessary imaging care," said John A. Patti, M.D., FACR, chair of the ACR Board of Chancellors. "The Image Wisely campaign is an important opportunity for radiologists to help referring physicians and medical imaging professionals understand which exams may be most appropriate and how these exams may be carried out in a safe, effective manner."

The Image Wisely campaign will initially focus on computed tomography (CT) scans. There were approximately 87 million CT scans performed in 2009 as rapidly evolving CT technology replaced more invasive and often more costly techniques. The Image Wisely campaign is an effort to help ensure that medical imaging protocols keep pace with this advancing technology.

"Through educational forums and research published in scientific journals, radiology professionals continually strive to develop and stay informed about the latest technological and clinical improvements for patient safety," said George S. Bisset III, M.D., chairman of the RSNA Board of Directors. "Image Wisely is radiology's effort to reach out and proactively deliver that knowledge to our physician colleagues. The Image Wisely website is also linked to the public information site RadiologyInfo.org (www.radiologyinfo.org) to help patients understand complex aspects of their medical imaging examinations."

The Image Wisely website (www.imagewisely.org) contains the latest research and educational materials to aid radiologists, radiologic technologists, medical physicists, and other imaging professionals in determining the appropriate technical parameters to be used in imaging and how the radiation received from these exams may affect patients over time. Also, the "My Medical Imaging History" card, co-developed by Image Wisely and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is downloadable from the site. This allows patients to keep track of their exams over time.

"Although CT provides outstanding images that are critical to the management of patient care, the images require more radiation than simple x-rays," said Michael Herman, Ph.D., president of the AAPM. "For this reason, it is most important that physicians have a firm understanding of the physics and technology of CT to enable them to judiciously select imaging parameters to eliminate unnecessary radiation to patients."

The four charter members of Image Wisely — the ACR, RSNA, ASRT and AAPM — represent more than 200,000 physicians, radiologic technologists and medical physicists who play key roles in medical imaging.

"Radiologic technologists are the final link in the chain of exposure as they perform CT scans," said James Temme, MPA, RT, (R)(QM), ASRT president. "The Image Wisely campaign provides a powerful forum for the ASRT to communicate to its members the importance of applying the correct protocol for size and body type of the patient."

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