

JOHNS HOPKINS

RADIOLOGY

Pregnancy Screening Policy Changes

With a better understanding of the radiation risks to a fetus, and for reasons related to gender health equity, Johns Hopkins Radiology has updated their pregnancy screening policy for exams utilizing x-rays.

Starting on August 1, 2024, patients will only be screened for pregnancy before CT or x-ray exams that would result in direct fetal exposure.

Patients will be screened for pregnancy for all MRI, Nuclear Medicine/PET, Interventional Radiology, DEXA and Mammography exams.

Rationale:

- If a potential fetus is outside of the imaging area, the radiation dose to the fetus is negligible. Fetal radiation exposure is not a concern in these situations.

EPIC Ordering Changes:

- “*Is the patient pregnant?*” has been removed from the list of ordering questions for all exams outside the lower torso (head, neck, chest, & extremity exams).
- The question will remain for exams where a potential fetus would be directly exposed, or in the field of view of the final image.
- If the patient is known to be pregnant, discuss risks/benefits of the exams with the patient and document that this conversation took place in the order notes.

Emergency Department:

- Starting on August 1st, Radiology will no longer wait for results of an HCG pregnancy test for CTs or x-rays of head, chest, and extremities. If the patient is getting a CT or an X-ray in the abdominal, pelvic, lumbar region, then the technologists will wait for the labs, unless the ordering provider overrides it for urgency.

For More Information:

- Read the full JHHS Policy # AMP701 at <https://hpo.johnshopkins.edu/doc/fetch.cfm/NFffWq7k>
- Providers with additional questions can contact Colin Paulbeck, Diagnostic Medical Physicist, at cpaulbeck@jhu.edu