

# DIAGNOSTIC X-RAY

## **What is a Diagnostic X-Ray?**

Diagnostic X-ray (radiography) is an examination using electromagnetic energy beams to produce images onto film or computer. X-Ray imaging is one of the fastest and easiest ways for a physician to view the internal organs and the conditions of bones. Because X-Rays are inexpensive and useful, they comprise a majority of all diagnostic procedures done on a worldwide annual basis.

## **Common Uses**

X-Ray imaging is essential tool for assessing skeletal trauma and capturing a comprehensive snapshot of the status of your lungs, heart, and blood vessels. Also commonly used for diagnosing the digestive tract, for high resolution diagnostic imaging of the breasts. X-Ray imaging is also available for imaging the kidneys, teeth and jaws, and the fine structures of the ear, nose, and throat.

## **Safety**

x-rays are safe when used with care. Radiologists and x-ray technologists have been trained to use the minimum amount of radiation necessary to obtain the needed results. The amount of radiation used in most examinations is very small and the benefits greatly outweigh the risk of harm.

Women should always inform the physician and technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant so that the necessary precautions can be taken.

## **What should I expect BEFORE my Diagnostic X-Ray?**

### **Medications**

Continue taking your current medications as normal unless specified by your physician.

### **Food and drink**

For most X-ray exams there are no restrictions on what you may eat or drink. Exceptions will be specified by your physician.

### **When to arrive**

Please arrive 15-20 minutes before your appointment.

### **What to wear**

Wear comfortable clothing, preferably clothes with no zipper or buttons, such as a sweats. You may also be asked to remove jewelry, eyeglasses and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images. Gowns are available if needed.

## **What will I experience DURING my Diagnostic X-Ray?**

### **Scanning**

The patient is positioned by the technologist so that the anatomy of interest is in the proper field of view between the X-Ray tube and film or image intensifier. The technologist will leave the room and ask you to remain perfectly still for a few moments or hold your breath (for a chest X-ray) while the X-Ray picture is taken.

Some X-Rays, such as an upper gastro-intestinal series, will require the patient to drink a barium

# DIAGNOSTIC X-RAY

solution immediately before the X-Rays are taken to help delineate the internal structures.

## **Length of Diagnostic X-Ray**

Depending on the type of X-Ray, it can last from 5 minutes to 60 minutes.

## **Contrast Medium**

An iodinated based contrast medium may be used with certain types of X-Rays; amounts differ depending on patient condition and type of exam performed.

## **What should I expect AFTER my Diagnostic X-ray?**

You may resume your normal activities, diet, and medications unless instructed otherwise by the technologist or your doctor. If you receive an injection of contrast medium before your X-rays, call your doctor if you experience pain, swelling or redness at the injection site.

## **Diagnostic X-Ray Results**

We understand that quick results are important for our patients. Exams are typically read within 24 hours and results will be sent to your physician who will go over them with you.