

Introduction

Your doctor has arranged a radiological examination using X-ray to you. The purpose of this examination is to provide information which is useful for the diagnosis and treatment of your disease.

The Procedure

1. You will be exposed to X-ray during this examination. If you are pregnant, both you and your fetus will be exposed to radiation.
2. For examinations with intravascular injection of iodinated contrast, iodinated contrast can cross placenta. If you are pregnant while intravascular iodinated contrast is injected, both you and your fetus will be exposed to iodinated contrast.

Risk of your fetus if you are pregnant

1. Risk of radiation:
 - The actual risk of radiation to your fetus depends on the gestational age and the radiation dose received by the fetus. The radiation dose varies according to individual examination. Our radiographer will keep the radiation dose as low as possible.
 - Theoretically, very high dose of radiation to fetus can cause fetal death (miscarriage), malformation, growth retardation or impairment of mental development. In practice, the radiation dose to fetus that normally results from diagnostic radiological examination is unlikely to cause these harms.
 - Radiation exposure to the fetus may slightly increase the possibility of cancer later in the child's life
 - The risk of radiation induced hereditary disease in the descendants of the fetus is very small.
2. Risk of iodinated contrast
 - You may be given intravenous iodinated contrast during the examination, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that injected iodinated contrast is with or without risk to the fetus

Preparation before the procedure

1. You should tell our nurse or radiographer before the examination if you are pregnant.
2. No contraceptive method is 100% effective. If you have any chance of being pregnant, you should tell our nurse or radiographer before the examination.
3. You should also tell our nurse or radiographer about the date of your last menstrual period (LMP).
4. You may be offered a urine pregnancy test if necessary. However, please note that urine pregnancy test CANNOT exclude very early pregnancy.
5. We will assess your likelihood of being pregnant, based on the available information.
6. If you are pregnant or if pregnancy cannot be excluded, we will re-assess the potential risk and benefit of performing this radiological examination to you and your fetus.
7. If the benefit of performing this radiological examination is greater than the risk, we may continue with this examination if you agree. It is your right to decide whether you want to continue with this examination.
8. If the risk of performing this radiological examination is greater than the benefit, we may consider to arrange alternative investigations which do not use radiation, or to reschedule this examination.

Care after the procedure

After the examination, in case you found that you might have already been pregnant on the date of this examination, please consult your clinical doctor for advice as soon as possible.

Disclaimer

This leaflet only provides general information pertaining to this procedure. While common risks and complications are described, the list is not exhaustive, and the degree of risk and other unforeseen complications may occasionally vary between patients. Please contact your doctor for detailed information and specific enquiry.

Reference

Smart Patient Website by Hospital Authority: Radiological Investigation Information to Women of Child-bearing Age (2019)