

WHY IS THE LEAD APRON NO LONGER USED ROUTINELY?

What is it?

Patient shielding means putting a protective cover, usually made of lead, on parts of your or your child's body that are not being examined during X-ray or CT scans.

In recent years, our understanding of using patient shielding for every exam has changed.

What has changed?

- 1 X-ray and CT machines have improved a lot. They now use much less radiation than before.
- 2 If shielding is not placed correctly or moves, it can cover important parts of the image and the scan may have to be repeated.
- 3 Shields can interfere with the machine's settings, leading to higher doses and lower image quality.
- 4 Shielding does not block scattered radiation that is already inside the body.
- 5 Shields can create hygiene problems.

For these reasons, routine patient shielding is no longer recommended. Staff use many other ways to keep radiation doses as low as possible.



What if I'm pregnant?

Sometimes X-rays or CT scans are needed even during pregnancy. Extra care will be taken, and we will decide if shielding is helpful. Always tell the staff if you are or might be pregnant before the exam. This helps us take special steps, like delaying the test or using other methods to keep radiation to your baby as low as possible.



Why do I wear protection while my child has the exam?

The test is for diagnosing and treating your child. Even though the radiation in the room is very low for people who are not being scanned, good practice means anyone staying in the room should wear a lead apron.

Why does the staff still wear protection?

Staff members are often exposed to radiation at work. They wear lead aprons to keep their own exposure as low as possible. That's why you see them wearing protective gear.

Are there exceptions?

Yes. If you ask or if needed, staff can give you shielding to cover parts of the body that are not being scanned.

Do you still have doubts?

Feel free to ask the staff about all the steps they take to keep radiation low for you or your child and whether shielding can be used.



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