

# 10 Pearls: **Appropriate referral** for CT examinations



1. Avoid inappropriate examinations by asking yourself:
  - A. Has it been done already?
  - B. Do I need it?
  - C. Do I need it now?
  - D. Is this the best examination?
  - E. Have I explained the clinical problem?

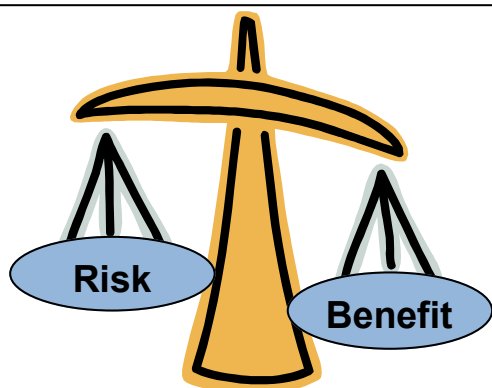
Adapted from: *iRefer: Making the best use of clinical radiology*. Royal College of Radiologists

<http://www.rcr.ac.uk/content.aspx?PageID=995>

More information at:

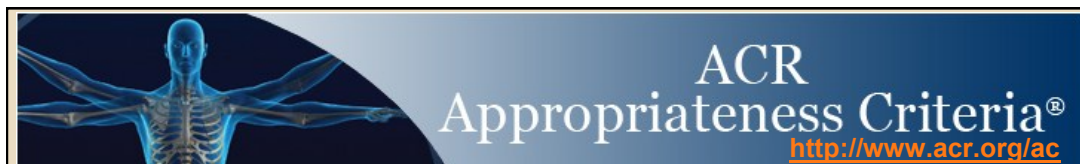
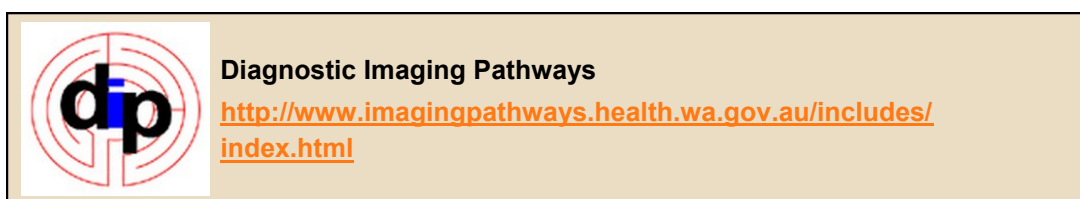
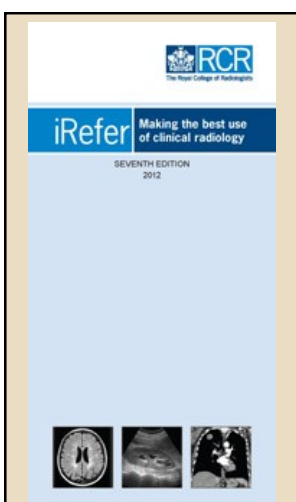
[https://rpop.iaea.org/RPOP/RPoP/Content/InformationFor/HealthProfessionals/6\\_OtherClinicalSpecialities/referring-medical-practitioners/index.htm](https://rpop.iaea.org/RPOP/RPoP/Content/InformationFor/HealthProfessionals/6_OtherClinicalSpecialities/referring-medical-practitioners/index.htm)

2. Discussion with the radiologist may help strengthen the justification process and reduce unhelpful imaging



3. Inform and discuss with the patient the benefits and risks of the examination

4. Keep informed about the appropriateness criteria and referral guidelines and use them in daily practice



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**10 Pearls: Radiation protection of patients in CT**

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5. Consult the radiologist/medical physicist and seek information at:

- [https://rpop.iaea.org/RPOP/RPoP/Content/InformationFor/HealthProfessionals/6\\_OtherCliniciansSpecialities/referring-medical-practitioners/index.htm](https://rpop.iaea.org/RPOP/RPoP/Content/InformationFor/HealthProfessionals/6_OtherCliniciansSpecialities/referring-medical-practitioners/index.htm)
- [www.rpop.iaea.org](http://www.rpop.iaea.org)

CT scans are among the most common radiation dose burdening examinations for patients

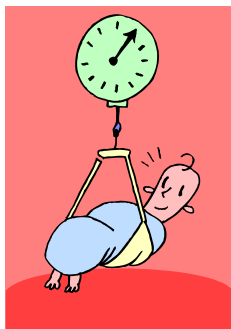
1 x



≈ 500 x



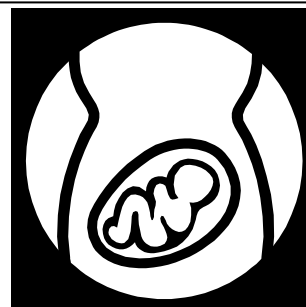
The effective dose from one chest CT scan may be equal to the corresponding dose of about 500 PA chest X rays



6. Be particularly careful to avoid inappropriate paediatric examinations. Some tissues in children are more sensitive to radiation and they have a longer lifespan over which cancer effects may be expressed

7. While the risk of cancer due to the x-rays from CT scans is very low, there is evidence that multiple CT scans can slightly increase the risk in children

Minimize the number of CT scans, especially in children



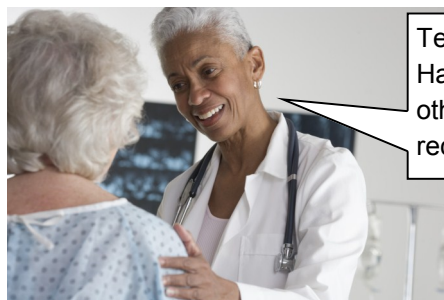
8. Always ask if the woman of reproductive age could be pregnant

Doctor, don't you think I should have a new chest CT scan? Just to be on the safe side



No Ms Williams, I really think that this examination will not add something to the correct assessment of your condition

9. Resist patient wishes to be examined when you feel it is not necessary



Tell me please: Have you had any other CT scans recently?

10. Repeat scanning of the patient to save time because previous records are not readily available is not part of a good practice



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