

MRI Patient and Practitioner Pregnancy

PURPOSE: To define the guidelines for patients and practitioners in the MRI setting.

POLICY: If pregnancy is established, consideration should be given to reassessing the potential risk versus the benefits of the pending study in determining whether performance of the requested MR examination could safely wait until the end of the pregnancy.

Patients

1. Pregnant patients can undergo MR at any stage of the pregnancy if the risk-benefit ratio warrants the procedure being completed by the MR medical director or designated radiologist.
2. The radiologist should confer with the referring physician and document the following in the radiology report or the patient's medical record.
 - a. The information requested from the MR cannot be acquired via non-ionizing means (ultrasonography).
 - b. The data are needed to potentially affect the care of the patient or fetus **during** the pregnancy.
 - c. The referring physician does not feel it is prudent to wait until the patient is no longer pregnant.
3. MR contrast agents should **not** be routinely provided to pregnant patients; this decision should be made case by case after a risk-benefit ratio has been conducted and documented. The risk to the fetus after administration of gadolinium based MR contrast agents remains unknown.
4. Pregnant patients undergoing MR procedures should provide written informed consent documenting that they understand the potential risks and benefits of the procedure to be performed, are aware of alternative options available (if any), and wish to proceed.

Practitioners

1. Pregnant health care practitioners are permitted to work in and around the MR environment throughout all stages of their pregnancy.
2. Acceptable activities include, but not limited to, positioning patients, scanning, archiving, injecting contrast material, and entering the MR scan room in response to an emergency.
3. Pregnant practitioners are not to remain within the MR scanner bore or Zone IV during actual data acquisition or scanning.

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Notes: Present data have not conclusively documented any deleterious effects of MR imaging exposure on the developing fetus.

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