



Network Notification

Date: December 13, 2011 **Number:** OH-P-2011-39
To: Ohio Ordering and Rendering Radiology Providers
From: CareSource
Subject: Radiation Safety and Most Frequently Requested Advanced Imaging Procedures

CareSource has initiated a Radiation Safety Awareness Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to improve patient safety by raising awareness regarding radiation exposure.

In July 2009, CareSource partnered with National Imaging Associates (NIA) to provide [radiology benefit management services](#). NIA provides utilization management services for non-emergent, outpatient MRI/MRA, CT/CTA and PET imaging procedures.

Radiation Exposure from Advanced Imaging

Cumulative radiation exposure from medical imaging is a rapidly growing patient safety concern. Patients are exposed to nearly six times more radiation from medical diagnostic tests than they were 30 years ago. One of the largest contributors to the increase in medical radiation exposure is CT scans.

CareSource Frequently Requested Advanced Imaging Procedures

In 2010, the following were the top five most frequently requested advanced imaging procedures under CareSource's utilization management program.

- Abdominal CT
- Pelvis CT
- Brain CT
- Chest CT
- Sinus CT

Overall, these five modalities account for 81% of the pediatric CT studies ordered by CareSource providers for CareSource's Covered Families and Children (CFC) population. The pediatric population includes children under the age of 18.

For the 18 and older population, these five modalities account for 86% of the total CT studies ordered.

Note: A patient's level of radiation exposure does not impact the prior authorization or decision-making process for requesting advanced radiology imaging studies.

Improving our members' health and well-being, as well as a mutual concern for their safety, are goals we share with our providers. The following is information that providers may find helpful when ordering advanced radiology procedures.

Considerations for Providers when Ordering Advanced Diagnostic Testing:

- Consider the risk versus the benefit of the radiology study
- Consider how the results of this study will help in managing your patient
- Consider if the ionizing radiation study is the best one to perform
- Consider if there are other tests such as ultrasound, lab or endoscopy testing which would be a more appropriate initial investigative study
- Carefully consider the necessity of repeating a CT scan, especially in young girls and young women, due to the radiation dose to breasts and ovaries
- Be aware of a patient's prior history of imaging studies. Discuss this with the radiologist
- Consider discussing this information with patients as this may enable them to take a more active role in their health care

Resources for CareSource Ordering and Rendering Providers & Facilities

- [CareSource Quick Reference Guide for Ordering Physicians](#)
- [CareSource Quick Reference Guide for Imaging Facilities](#)
- [Radiology Benefit Management Program Questions and Answers](#)
- [Are X-Rays and CT Scans Safe?](#)
- [An Overview of Clinical Radiation and Patient Safety](#)
- [Ionizing Radiation Exposure from Radiologic Imaging: The Issue and What We Can Do](#)

We know that good health care begins with our valued providers. Together we can make this happen.