



TOOLKIT 23 · RADIATION & IMAGING SAFETY · TOOL 1 OF 3

Could You Be Pregnant? — Check Before X-ray, CT and Nuclear Medicine

The question asked of every female patient of childbearing age before every examination using ionising radiation, and what happens with each answer

Ask every female patient aged 12–55: "Is there any chance you could be pregnant? When was the first day of your last period?" — Ask privately. Do not assume from age, appearance, or the presence of a partner. Record the answer and the date of the last period before every examination that uses ionising radiation.

Answer	Extremity, chest, skull X-ray (uterus outside the beam)	Abdomen, pelvis, spine, hip X-ray; any CT of abdomen/pelvis; fluoroscopy; nuclear medicine
No — period within 4 weeks, or not possible	Proceed	Proceed
Not sure — period overdue, or irregular	Proceed (shield where useful)	Do not proceed. Pregnancy test; or defer to within 10 days of the next period; or the referring doctor justifies proceeding in writing
Yes — pregnant	Proceed only if justified; inform the patient; shield	Do not proceed unless the referring doctor and radiologist agree it is essential and cannot wait; document the justification and the estimated fetal dose; consider ultrasound or MRI instead
Cannot answer (age, capacity, language)	Ask the accompanying person; interpreter	As above, with the representative; if still unknown, treat as "not sure"

Waiting-room sign (print separately in your languages)

IF YOU COULD BE PREGNANT, PLEASE TELL US BEFORE YOUR EXAMINATION

Even if you are not sure. It is confidential. Some examinations use radiation and we may choose a different test or a different time.

Record: patient _____ · exam _____ · date _____ · asked ☐ · LMP _____ · answer: no / not sure / yes / unknown · action _____ · radiographer _____

Adapted from IAEA Radiation Protection of Patients guidance and the "28-day rule" as applied in European practice.

ASF standards: Hospital Standard 4 — radiation safety (means of verification: recorded check on every request; sign displayed)