

ST VINCENTS & OPTIMAL IMAGING PEDIATRIC IMAGING GUIDELINES

General Comments

- The following policies apply to all outpatients, inpatients, ER patients and urgent care patients at all St. Vincents and Optimal Imaging centers.
- A pediatric patient is defined as a patient less than 18 years of age.
- A radiologist is allowed to deviate from this policy on a case by case bases, however that radiology must be the one to interpret the examination or to perform the procedure.
- Children often present with unique pathologies not encountered in adult practice.
- Children are significantly more radiosensitive than adults due to their higher body surface-to-weight ratio and longer life expectancy during which radiation-induced malignancies can develop.
- Pediatric CT imaging requires weight- or size-based parameter adjustments rather than standard adult protocols.
- Pediatric radiology emphasizes non-ionizing modalities whenever feasible.
- Pediatric imaging faces unique technical challenges including motion artifact management and patient cooperation.
- MRI is preferred over CT when time and clinical stability permit, though it may require sedation in younger children, introducing separate risks.

Xray Examinations

- All xray examinations are allowed.

CT Examinations

- All CT examinations are allowed.
- Do not perform a without and with IV contrast or a multiphase examination without approval by a radiologist regardless of what the order indicates. The patient should not be exposed to the extra radiation dose without an appropriate indication.

US Examinations

- US examinations of the thyroid, neck, abdomen, renal, pelvis and soft tissues are allowed.
- US examinations of the abdomen for intussusception or pyloric stenosis and hip examinations for hip dysplasia should be referred to a center with fellowship-trained pediatric radiologists (i.e. Nemours or UF Shands).

MRI Examinations

- All MRI examinations on patients 14 years or older are allowed.
- Patients younger than 14 years should be referred to a center with fellowship-trained pediatric radiologists (i.e. Nemours or UF Shands).
- Do not administer IV gadolinium contrast to a pediatric patient without approval by a radiologist regardless of what the order indicates.

Fluoro Examinations

- Fluoroscopic examinations are not allowed.
- Fluoroscopic examinations include: esophagram, upper GI, small bowel follow through, enema, modified barium swallow, cystogram, urethrogram, loopogram, hysterosalpingogram.
- These patients should be referred to a center with fellowship-trained pediatric radiologists (i.e. Nemours or UF Shands).

Breast Examinations

- Breast ultrasound examinations on patients 14 years or older are allowed.
- Mammography and breast MRI examinations are not allowed.

Nuclear Medicine Examinations

- Nuclear medicine examinations are not allowed.
- These examinations should be referred to a center with fellowship-trained pediatric radiologists (i.e. Nemours or UF Shands).

Procedures

- Ultrasound procedures, joint procedures and lumbar punctures on patients 14 years or older are allowed.
- Other procedures are not allowed.