ST. JOSEPH'S · ST. MICHAEL'S · PROVIDENCE
UNITY HEALTH TORONTO

Can I have an X-ray or CT scan while I am pregnant?

Information for patients and families

Your health care team may order CT scans and X-rays to look at your bones, tissue, organs and blood vessels.

CT scans and X-ray tests produce radiation. However, only a small amount of radiation comes from an X-ray or CT scan.

Why do I need to have an X-ray or CT scan?

- X-rays and CT scans are a way to see inside your body.
- Your health care team can look at the X-rays or CT scans to try to understand your symptoms.

Is there another kind of test I can have that doesn't produce radiation?

- Yes, some tests don't produce radiation.
- Ultrasound and MRI don't produce radiation, but these tests may not give the information your healthcare team needs to understand your symptoms.

How much radiation is safe during pregnancy?

- The health risks are low for small amounts of radiation.
- The highest amount of radiation that is safe for pregnant women and unborn babies is 50 milli-Grays (mGy).
- You can look at the chart on the next page to see how much radiation comes from each type of test.

Body part	Usual amount of radiation from X-ray or CT scan
Teeth, mouth and jaw	X-ray: 0.01 milliGrays (mGy)
Chest	X-ray: 0.01 mGy CT Scan: 0.06 mGy
Mammography (Breasts)	X-ray: 0.05 mGy
Pelvis	X-ray: 1.1 mGy CT Scan: 25 mGy
Abdomen	X-ray: 1.4 mGy CT Scan: 8.0 mGy
Lumbar spine	X-ray: 1.7 mGy CT Scan: 2.4 mGy
Head	CT Scan: 0.005 mGy

How will I know if my baby and I are in contact with too much radiation?

- Your health care team will count the amount of radiation that comes from each test that you have to make sure that you and your baby are safe.
- If you are worried, please ask questions about the total amount of radiation your tests will add up to.