SCHROEDER
AMBULATORY CENTRE

# Lead Shielding Guideline

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## Why do you not shield patients with lead aprons anymore?

Modern imaging technology keeps radiation exposure extremely low while producing high-quality images. Today's equipment delivers 20–25 times less radiation than 70 years ago, thanks to digital advancements. Studies show that the body is less sensitive to diagnostic radiation than once believed. Our imaging team follows safety guidelines from Health Canada, CAMRT and CAR to keep radiation exposure as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA) while providing safe, accurate, and high-quality imaging care for every patient.

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## Doesn't shielding make me safer?

The amount of radiation in most imaging tests is very low, so the risk to you is minimal or none. Shields provide little to no protection. If your reproductive organs are far from the area being imaged, shielding is unnecessary. If the area being scanned is very close to your reproductive organs, a shield may block important details, and the exam might need to be repeated.

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## What if I'm pregnant?

If you are pregnant or think you might be, please let the technologist know before your exam. Your safety and your baby's safety are our top priorities. The technologist will carefully assess and follow all safety protocols and use techniques that keep radiation exposure as low as possible. According to CAMRT guidelines, routine fetal shielding is not necessary, as modern equipment uses very low radiation and poses no risk to you or your baby. In some cases, shielding can cover important areas, which may require repeat images, resulting in more exposure overall.

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## How about my child?

Children are protected through optimized pediatric techniques, including lower exposure settings, precise collimation, and specialized pediatric imaging protocols. Routine gonadal shielding is generally not required, unless it provides a clear benefit and does not interfere with the exam.

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## I still want to be shielded.

Every member of the Diagnostic Imaging team is committed to providing patients with the information they need to make informed decisions. Your technologist will be happy to answer any questions you may have. If you feel more comfortable, lead shielding may still be requested only if it does not block the body part that we need to image and/or it does not negatively affect the image quality.

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## Should I wear a lead shield as a caregiver?

As a caregiver, you may need to stay with the loved ones during their test. Because you are not the patient being imaged, there is no benefit nor need for you to be exposed to any radiation at all, so shielding will be provided to you.