

RADIATION PROTECTION OF NURSES AND THERAPISTS

PURPOSE

This procedure establishes guidelines for radiation protection of nurses, therapists and others who attend patients during fluoroscopic examinations or radiation therapy with radioactive implants. Responsibilities for assuring the various aspects of radiation protection are specified.

POLICY

Personnel who are required to attend patients undergoing various radiological procedures are to be protected from radiation exposure to the greatest extent feasible, consistent with providing safe, competent care of the patient.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following individuals are responsible for the specific aspects of radiation protection described for each of them.

The **Nurse, Therapist or Other Employee** shall:

Demonstrate knowledge of radiation protection principles, particularly the use of time, distance and shielding for minimizing radiation exposures.

Utilize lead aprons, and other protective apparel or equipment, as instructed.

Avoid placing any part of the body in the direct beam of a fluoroscopy unit at any time. (If there is ever an absolute need to place a hand in the beam for any reason, lead gloves must be worn in addition to a lead apron.)

Demonstrate knowledge of radiation dose limits and individual monitoring requirements for radiation users, and for the embryo/fetus.

Report a suspected pregnancy to the Head Nurse promptly to assure appropriate work assignments.

The **Physician** shall:

Inform the nursing unit of fluoroscopic techniques that will be required or of the location of implanted sources.

The **Head Nurse** shall:

Ensure that all employees who may be attending patients during fluoroscopy or radiation therapy are provided with appropriate training. (A radiation safety training session may be requested annually from the RSO, Radiological Health Department, Ext. 6141. A handout for new employees is also available from the RSO.)

Provide lead aprons for use by anyone who must be within 3 feet of the patient during fluoroscopic procedures.

Assign pregnant employees to duties that will minimize exposures to radiation.

Inform staff, patient and family of any activity or time restrictions for care or visitation.

The **Radiology Department** shall:

Provide specific, written instructions for control of radiation exposures and contamination during care of patients with radioactive implants or therapeutic doses of radiopharmaceuticals.

The **Radiation Oncology Department** shall:

Provide specific written instructions for control of radiation exposures during care of patients with radioactive implants.

The **Radiation Safety Officer** shall:

Establish consistent University and Hospital policies for radiation protection, training and monitoring.

Provide radiation safety training sessions upon request or at the frequency required by regulations.

Evaluate the exposure potential of radiation users to assure that they are properly classified for monitoring purposes.

Provide individual radiation dosimeters to all normally exposed radiation users.