

POLICY: EXAM PRESCRIPTION

ISSUED: 4/2/97

PURPOSE: To ensure the appropriateness and quality of the examinations performed by all areas of the CT Scan Department.

STATEMENT: Established CT Scan Exam Protocols provide the guideline for exam prescription. These protocols, in their entirety, are located in the CT Control Rooms. Condensed versions, located in the CT Interpretation Rooms, are used by the radiologists when prescribing exams.

All exams must be prescribed by a radiologist prior to the CT examination. In the event that a radiologist is unavailable, the technologist should proceed with the study and document the unavailability of the radiologist.

THE PROCESS

THE RADIOLOGIST

The fellow or resident radiologist will prescribe all exams. Exams will be prescribed on the day prior. Add-ons will be prescribed throughout the day in an on-going fashion. On Fridays, all exams scheduled for the Saturday, Sunday and following Monday are prescribed.

Exams will be prescribed using the department's established exam protocols, using clinical history, the stated reason for the exam, and reports from any previous studies.

The radiologist will obtain previous findings from the Radiology Management computer system and write the findings on the CT requisition in the space provided.

Each prescription will be signed by the prescribing fellow or resident radiologist.

The staff radiologist will be consulted as needed.

THE TECHNOLOGIST

The technologist will perform the examination as prescribed unless:

- The exam is not prescribed.

- The exam prescription is not signed.

- There are questions or concerns that may change the exam parameters or requirements.

- The exam cannot be completed as prescribed due to physical limitations of the patient.

- The exam cannot be completed as prescribed due to existing medical conditions.

- The exam cannot be completed as prescribed due to inadequate patient preparation.

Whenever a question or concern exists, the radiologist must be consulted.

The technologist must write a notation in the “Tech Note” section of the CT requisition and in the “Comment” section of the log sheet to explain any variance from the original prescription. The technologist must sign her/his name.

NOTE: Any time there is an absence or insufficient instructions and a radiologist is not available to consult, adhere to the exam protocols as outlined in the exam protocol manuals. If the information available is not clear-cut and protocol selection cannot be made confidently, page the radiologist for consultation. If the radiologist is not available, proceed with the exam that most likely fits the clinical history. A no contrast exam would have to be performed if the radiologist is unavailable. The technologist must document the unavailability of the radiologist and/or the telephone prescription in the tech section of the CT requisition.

THE PROCEDURE

In the Meehan CT area:

Adult exams are prescribed by the Radiology resident or fellow assigned to the Meehan CT area on the day prior. Add-ons for the second shift are prescribed late in the afternoon, other add-ons are prescribed as needed throughout the day. If there are any questions, the CT attending radiologist is consulted. When the attending CT radiologist is not available, the attending radiologist scheduled in Davol Radiology or the attending on-call radiologist should be contacted for exam requirement clarification.

Pediatric Exams are prescribed by the pediatric radiologist on the day prior and as needed throughout the day. After 5:00 pm and on weekends, pediatric exams are prescribed by the CT radiology resident. If there is a question, the pediatric attending on-call radiologist is paged.

In the Medical Office Center:

Adult exams are prescribed by the Radiology resident assigned to the Medical Office Center on the day prior. Add-ons are prescribed as needed throughout the day.

Pediatric exams are prescribed by the pediatric radiologist on the day prior and as needed throughout the day.

In the Emergency Department:

Note: In the Emergency Department the referring physicians consult directly with the radiologist before an exam is ordered except when ordering a non-contrast head CT. Referring physicians must give enough history to allow for proper prescription of the exam.

The Davol radiologists prescribe both adult and pediatric exams. Radiology residents consult with CT attending and/or pediatric radiologists as needed.

Patient processors should only accept requisitions that have been appropriately completed by the referring physician and prescribed by the radiologists. In the case of a non-contrast head CT requisition, the patient processor should check for adequate history.

Non-contrast brain procedure; adults and pediatric:

The Davol Emergency Room nurse brings the stamped CT requisition to the patient processor, Hasbro requests are faxed to Davol Radiology.

The patient processor gives the requisition to the radiologist.

The radiologist enters the appropriate exam prescription in the space provided on the CT requisition.

The radiologist gives the CT requisition to the patient processor.

The patient processor prelogs the exam and notifies the CT technologist.

All other adult exam procedure:

The Emergency Room physician brings the stamped CT requisition to the radiologist.

The case is discussed and the radiologist enters the appropriate exam prescription in the space provided on the CT requisition.

The radiologist gives the CT requisition to the patient processor.

The patient processor prelogs the exam and notifies the CT technologist.

All other pediatric exam procedure:

The Emergency Room physician completes the CT requisition.

The physician has the request faxed to the Davol Radiology desk.

The patient processor gives the requisition to the radiologist to prescribe.

The radiologist contacts the ordering physician, as needed, and enters the appropriate exam prescription in the space provided on the CT requisition.

The radiologist gives the CT requisition to the patient processor.

The patient processor prelogs the exam and notifies the CT technologist.

NOTE: IN THE EVENT A RADIOLOGIST IS NOT IN THE DAVOL RADIOLOGY AREA WHEN NEEDED, THE PHYSICIAN WILL LEAVE THE CT REQUISITION WITH THE PATIENT PROCESSOR WHO WILL PAGE THE RADIOLOGIST. THE RADIOLOGIST WILL CONSULT WITH THE PHYSICIAN VIA THE TELEPHONE OR UPON RETURN TO THE AREA, WHICHEVER IS APPROPRIATE AT THE TIME.