

RADIOLOGIC SAFETY

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Focusing In

After the magnificent and inspirational feat of circumnavigating the world, Sir Francis Drake—who began shipboard life as a cabin boy—was given a ring by Queen Elizabeth I with the inscription “sic parvus magna”. Greatness from small 89/+-beginnings. It can be all too easy to lose perspective in the torrent of major events of 2020. Our personal lives have changed. Our practices have changed. Although the sweep of history is beyond our individual control, we can continue to make a difference in our own communities. “Focusing in” on incremental progress in our practices will improve the lives of our patients and staff—as well as affect our sense of control and well-being.

Here are a few suggestions for your practice that are within reach and will make you feel better (or at least more professionally informed) for having checked them out:

- Take the pledge to Image Wisely and Image Gently. The publicity around medical ionizing radiation has decreased but the risk has not. The websites (imagewisely.org and imagegently.org) contain a trove of useful information and links. Take a moment to take the pledge(s) and browse the websites
- The ACR manages a website (acr.org) that contains comprehensive information and links on clinical, educational, regulatory, and practice management topics. It is a useful resource with an impressive amount of material. Consider this site to be your first stop for answers about the practice of radiology
- The ACR curates an inclusive set of Practice Parameters and Technical Standards covering numerous facets of clinical practice (acr.org/clinical-resources/practice-parameters-and-technical-standards). Standardization around best practice is a logical way to improve service quality. Interested in starting a CT lung cancer screening program? Have a particular concern about how to communicate diagnostic imaging results? Been awhile since you have done an intussusception reduction but are now in a practice that does them? Each of these topics has their own Practice Standard
- By the way, the ACR circulates new Practice Parameters and Technical Standards as they are created and reviews older Parameters and Standards at least once every five years. The fourth round of reviews for the year closed on November 6. Look for the next round of reviews. The ACR gives its members a chance to comment on them as part of the revision process, which is an easy way for you to review their contents and how they might apply to your practice

- The ACR Manual on Contrast Media is now in its 2020 version (acr.org/clinical-resources/contrast-manual). One enhancement has been the addition of downloadable adult and pediatric contrast reaction treatment cards—a quick crib. The Manual is an impressive, readable, and thoroughly referenced guide to contrast safety. There is even a section that summarizes ultrasound contrast.
- The ACR Appropriateness Criteria represent the most comprehensive set of evidence-based guidelines for the selection of diagnostic imaging exams and interventional procedures (acr.org/clinical-resources/ACR-appropriateness-criteria). At the moment, 198 diagnostic imaging and interventional radiology topics with 965 clinical variants have been published, dealing with over 1700 clinical scenarios. The ACR criteria qualify for use by medical providers to fulfill PAMA (Protecting Access to Medicare Act) requirements when ordering advanced diagnostic imaging exams and have been incorporated into ACR Select®
- The Joint Commission publishes annual Patient Safety Goals (jointcommission.org/standards). Fortunately for us, they also publish simplified versions of these that are a quick read. Some pertain to Radiology (such as patient identification and labeling medications). The Joint Commission also pre-publishes their upcoming standards (one of these for 2021 concerns fluoroscopy exposure). If for no other reason, reviewing these will let you know what preparations your Radiology Department administrator is making for your next Joint Commission audit
- Finally, we welcome all MRS members to share safety and quality experiences from their practice with our readership. To date, the safety vignettes (like this one) in the MRS Newsletter have been written by the MRS Radiology Safety Committee. However, all of us have valuable experience to communicate, with the potential to improve our collective practice of Radiology.

Sic parvus magna.

Best wishes in the upcoming year.

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