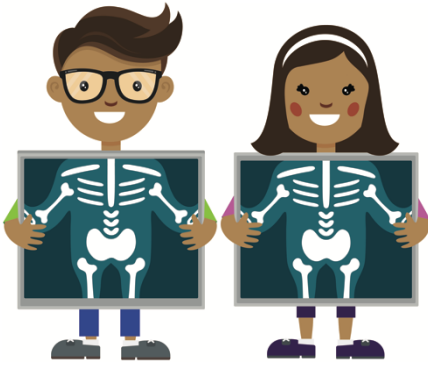


# Updates to Shielding Policy for Patients



Johns Hopkins is updating our imaging practice to remove lead shields during x-ray exams. This is based on updated research and lower amounts of radiation used during imaging exams. This change applies to all of our patients, and is recommended from leading medical and radiation safety organizations.

You, or your guardians, may feel anxious about this change and may request that shields be used during your exam. If so, our technologists will provide shielding so long as it does not prevent us from getting a good image.

The new policy does not change other radiation protection policies. Any staff, guardians, or caregivers in the room should still wear protective lead aprons. This is because only you, the patient, benefits from the radiation.

National groups in medical imaging and radiation safety agree that using lead shields provides no benefit to your safety during the x-ray exam. The best way for us to safely get quality images is to not use shields.

## Background:



We know much more about how radiation affects humans since this practice first became widespread in the 1950s. Back then, it was thought that radiation could harm someone's future children. We have since learned that the amount of radiation used in medical imaging has no effect on your current or future reproductive health.



The amount of radiation used in x-ray exams has decreased by up to 95% since the 1950s due to advances in medical imaging technology.



Modern X-ray tubes only direct radiation where it is needed. Shields that are placed in the image would block this useful radiation. Shields placed outside of the image provide no benefit as there is no radiation going there.



When shields do make their way into the image and block what we're trying to see, repeat images may be needed. This will increase the amount of radiation you receive. To get a good image, it is best to not use shields.

## For More Information:

This policy change is being implemented at other top medical centers across the country and is supported by leading medical imaging groups:

- American Association of Physicists in Medicine
- American College of Radiology
- Image Gently & Image Wisely



For more information, read the FAQs from the American Association of Physicists in Medicine at this link, or by scanning the QR code.

[https://www.aapm.org/org/policies/documents/CARES\\_FAQs\\_Patient\\_Shielding.pdf](https://www.aapm.org/org/policies/documents/CARES_FAQs_Patient_Shielding.pdf)