

Chest X-Ray

For more information, visit the "Imaging & Diagnosis Section" at Angioplasty.Org (www.angioplasty.org/imaging)
-- Supported by Toshiba America Medical Systems --

A simple chest X-ray (also called a roentgenogram, after Wilhelm Röntgen, who discovered the X-ray in 1895) is often the first imaging done of the heart. It is also the most commonly performed imaging procedure. According to the American Journal of Roentgenology, chest X-rays are taken in almost 20% of all Emergency Room visits: 22 million were done in 2003.

The X-ray exposure is minimal to the patient -- according to the American Heart Association, it's about 1/5 of the annual exposure one normally gets from natural sources, such as the sun.



*Frontal and lateral chest X-ray views made with T.RAD Plus Digital system***



*Standalone X-ray unit***

Chest X-rays show the size, shape and position of the heart, lungs and bone structures of the chest. Sometimes your physician may order two views: a frontal and lateral (side) view.

A chest X-ray can be made at the patient's bedside, or in a dedicated room. The latest digital units eliminate film entirely and allow for wider coverage at low radiation levels.

The chest X-ray can tell your physician if your heart has defects, is enlarged, has significant calcification, pulmonary blood flow or if there is fluid in the lungs, sometimes the result of a heart attack. The chest X-ray is a preliminary procedure and is sometimes not necessary if the physician has ruled out congestive heart failure and heart defects, since the X-ray shows only the exterior shapes of the heart and surrounding areas. It does not image the interior chambers or arteries.

Who Does the Procedure: Chest X-rays are usually done by a Radiology Technologist (RT) and interpreted by a Radiologist.

Patient Preparation: No preparation is necessary before getting a chest X-ray, other than removing metal objects such as necklaces and other metallic objects. etc. It is *very important* to let the technologist know if you are pregnant: X-rays are not normally done on women who are pregnant. The amount of radiation exposure is small for an adult, but can affect a developing fetus.

**** photos courtesy of Toshiba America Medical Systems**

Angioplasty.Org is an independent educational health site
The Imaging and Diagnosis Section of Angioplasty.Org is sponsored by
Toshiba America Medical Systems
Unless otherwise noted, all content, including text, photos and video
© Copyright Venture Digital LLC 1996-2007