

Society of Interventional Radiology Position Statement on Radiation Safety

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J Vasc Interv Radiol 2003; 14:S387

THE use of radiation in diagnosing and treating patients has significantly advanced the field of medicine and saved or extended countless lives. We continue to find new, more sophisticated applications and refine and improve standard treatments to the benefit of patients. The use of radiation, however, is not without risk. As interventional radiologists who use this technology in our daily practice, we

are keenly aware of its exceptional benefits and its risks.

Those who use radiation must be adequately trained in radiation safety, radiation physics, the biologic effects of radiation, and injury prevention to ensure patient safety. This training is standard in radiology and interventional radiology training programs. There are segments of the medical community that use radiation with significantly less formal training in radiation safety and radiation physics than radiologists and interventional radiologists possess. Under this circumstance of lesser formal training, radiation injuries from fluoroscopy may be more likely to occur.

Radiation safety is an ongoing area of research in radiology and interven-

tional radiology so that we may better understand the effects of radiation on the body and develop new techniques that achieve excellent results while limiting radiation exposure. The Society of Interventional Radiology (SIR) recognizes the importance of this research and looks for opportunities to support it through grants from the Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology Research and Education Foundation (CIRREF), its charitable arm.

We recognize that the physician has a responsibility to advise patients of the potential risks of radiation in a particular procedure so they can be weighed against possible benefits. The best decisions can be achieved when an informed physician and patient work together as a team.

This article first appeared in J Vasc Interv Radiol 2001; 12:281.

Approved by the SIR Operations Committee August 14, 2000. Address correspondence to SIR, 10201 Lee Highway, Suite 500, Fairfax, VA 22030.

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DOI: 10.1097/01.RVI.0000094609.61428.a4