

# So Long Shields!

Discontinuation of **patient** shielding for X-ray based imaging exams

In order to provide the highest quality diagnostic exams at the lowest health risk, we will **no longer** place lead shields over your child during their X-ray exam.

This change in practice is based on many years of research which have shown that levels of radiation used in modern X-ray exams are so low that the risk of harm is very small or zero. These studies conclude that shields have no added benefit for patient safety.

Studies have also shown that shielding patients carries the risk of using more radiation than not shielding and could cover a body part that the doctor needs to see.

For patient safety, experts on X-ray radiation agree that patient shields should not be used.

## Discontinuation of patient shields is supported by the following:

- In April 2019 the **FDA-recommended to end the use of gonadal and fetal shielding on patients** during medical diagnostic X-ray procedures.
- In April 2019, The **American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM)** recommended not using **patient shields**.
- Over 50 years of research have shown that **radiation levels used in modern X-ray exams have no hereditary effects** (i.e., mutations in the reproductive system).
- **Use of patient shields may hide anatomy** that the doctor needs to see and lead to **repeat** exams.
- Modern X-ray machines are designed to automatically increase radiation if it detects objects that block X-rays from getting through. Therefore, **patient shields can trick the system into increasing radiation**.
- **Lurie Children's Medical Imaging Department only uses the latest X-ray imaging technology**. The radiation used for our diagnostic imaging exams is among the lowest in the country.

For more information and FAQs please visit:  
[www.LurieChildrens.org/PatientShielding](http://www.LurieChildrens.org/PatientShielding)

