

12 | 7 | 2009 Posted By Regan Zambri & Long

FDA Warning: Excessive Radiation from CT Brain Perfusion Scans



By [Catherine D. Bertram, Esquire](#)

The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#), FDA, issued an updated warning to health care professionals today regarding excessive radiation exposure for an additional 50 patients during [CT brain perfusion scans](#). The warning is as follows:

"The FDA, working with state and local health authorities, has identified at least 50 additional patients who were exposed to excess radiation of up to eight times the expected level during their CT perfusion scans. These cases so far involve more than one manufacturer of CT scanners. Some of these patients reported hair loss or skin redness following their scans. High doses of radiation can cause cataracts and increase the risk of some forms of cancer.

On the basis of its investigation to date, the FDA is providing interim recommendations for imaging facilities, radiologists, and radiologic technologists to help prevent additional cases of excess exposure.

These recommendations include:

- Facilities assess whether patients who underwent CT perfusion scans received excess radiation.
- Facilities review their radiation dosing protocols for all CT perfusion studies to ensure that the correct dosing is planned for each study.
- Facilities implement quality control procedures to ensure that dosing protocols are followed every time and the planned amount of radiation is administered.
- Radiologic technologists check the CT scanner display panel before performing a study to make sure the amount of radiation to be delivered is at the appropriate level for the individual patient.
- If more than one study is performed on a patient during one imaging session, practitioners should adjust the dose of radiation so it is appropriate for each study."

You can review the MedWatch safety summary, including a link to the FDA News Release, by clicking [here](#).

About the author:

[Catherine Bertram](#) is board certified in civil trials. Ms. Bertram has 20 years of trial experience and is unique in that she was formerly the Director of Risk Management for Georgetown University Hospital so she brings a wealth of knowledge to her practice including how hospitals should be run and what doctors and nurses can do to protect patients. She is a partner with the firm and devotes [her practice](#) to the representation of patients and families of loved ones who have been injured or lost due to medical errors. Ms. Bertram lectures regularly to lawyers and health care providers, nationally and locally, regarding patient safety, medical negligence and other related issues. She can be reached by email at cbertram@reganfirm.com or by phone 202-822-1875.