

Breast Imaging Suite

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X-RAY DYE

X-ray dye, also called contrast material or medium (not actually a “dye”), is any internally administered substance that differs in density from soft tissue on X-ray studies or CT scans. Having a different density than soft tissues means the X-ray interacts in such a way that the contrast medium provides improved discernment or “contrast” between adjacent structures. This allows the radiologist to see anatomy more clearly.

TYPES OF CONTRAST INCLUDE

- Barium, water or air – used to make parts of the gastrointestinal tract visible on X-ray.
- Water-soluble iodine – used to better visualize blood vessels and internal body structures on X-ray or CT studies, or outline joints (the spaces between bones) during arthrography.
- Paramagnetic substances – not typically used for X-ray studies (primarily used for MRI studies).

ALLERGIES AND REACTIONS TO CONTRAST

It is important to inform your doctor or the technologist prior to your exam if you have a history of allergies or reactions to medications, substances such as latex, or to contrast agents such as X-ray dye.

Today there is low incidence of reactions to contrast. The following factors, however, have been identified as increasing the risk for a contrast medium allergies and reactions.

- History of reaction to contrast agents
- Asthma or severe allergies
- Sickle cell anemia
- Multiple myeloma, renal insufficiency and diabetes mellitus.

Allergic reactions range from mild (nausea or hives) to severe (respiratory and/or cardiac arrest). Patients with a history of allergic reactions can be pretreated prior to the procedure. Ask your doctor for more information.

Contrast-induced nephropathy (CIN) may be seen in patients with underlying renal insufficiency or in diabetic patients taking Metformin (Glucophage®). These patients will need to stop taking Metformin prior to the examination and may need pretreatment prior to the procedure. Ask your doctor for more information.

Concord Imaging Center uses state-of-the-art “non-ionic” contrast medium, which reduces your risk of reactions.