

# X-ray

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## What is an X-ray?

An X-ray is a form of energy that can pass through your child's bone and tissue to create an image. The image created and the exam itself is also called an X-ray. A doctor called a radiologist looks at the image to find and diagnose conditions in the body.

Bone looks white on an X-ray because it is dense. Less dense areas — such as the lungs, which are mainly air — look black or grayish on an X-ray.

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## How can I prepare my child for the exam?

Dress your child comfortably in clothes that are easy to take off. Sweat pants and shirt are a good choice. Your child may be given a gown to change into.

Your child should not wear jewelry or clothing with metal (zippers or snaps) in the area that will be X-rayed.

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## How do we check in for the appointment?

You need to have a doctor's order, like a prescription, before your child is X-rayed. If the X-ray was ordered by a doctor at Children's, we have the order in our computer system. If the X-ray was ordered by a doctor outside of Children's, please bring the order with you, or call before you come to make sure that your child's doctor faxed it to Children's.

You do not need an appointment for plain diagnostic X-rays. You do need an appointment for bone surveys.

Check in at the level 6 registration desk inside the Ocean entrance. After you register, you will be directed to the Radiology reception area. The wait time is usually 5 to 45 minutes, depending on how busy Radiology is. The busiest time is between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

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## What happens during the exam?

This varies a little, depending on the part of your child's body being X-rayed. Most of the time, the technologist will take two to three images from different angles or with your child in different positions.

The X-ray machine will either be a long table with a camera on top of it or a large plate against the wall, with the camera pointing at it.

The technologist will position your child and point the camera at the body part being examined. The camera will not touch your child, but it may come close. A light will shine from the camera to help the technologist position your child to get the best image possible.

We will put a shield on your child as long as it does not get in the way of the exam. If you stay in the room, we will give you a shield to wear also.

The technologist will ask your child to hold still. Your child may also be asked to hold their breath for a second. You may be asked to help hold your child still during the exam. Any movement during an X-ray will cause the image to be blurry. The images appear on a computer screen and are sent to

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### To Learn More

- Radiology  
206-987-2089
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- [seattlechildrens.org](http://seattlechildrens.org)

### Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.



the radiologist to be read.

Your child will not feel the X-rays, but sometimes, the positions needed to get the right images are awkward or uncomfortable. Your child will only have to be in these positions for a couple of seconds.

A parent or caregiver can stay in the room with their child. Please make other arrangements for siblings.

Women who are pregnant or may be pregnant will be asked to leave the room during the test. Please make sure to bring someone else with you who can stay with your child during the test, if needed.

There are no special instructions for your child to follow after the X-ray.

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### **Does the X-ray use radiation?**

Yes, your child will be exposed to a small amount of radiation. We understand that radiation dose is a special concern for children. To lower how much radiation your child is exposed to, we tailor the X-rays based on your child's age, weight and area to be examined.

If you have questions about the exam and whether it is needed, please contact the doctor who ordered the X-ray for your child.

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### **How do we get the results?**

The images from your child's radiology procedure are typically reviewed by a radiologist within 24 to 48 hours, and a report will be sent to the doctor who ordered the test. If you have a clinic or doctor appointment scheduled, the doctor will review the results with you then. If you do not have a visit scheduled, you should call your child's doctor for the results.