

Argus Orthopaedic Zone

Too Much X-Ray Exposure?

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Today I want to address a silent problem you should be aware of to stay healthy.

Americans are the most imaged population in the world. I'm speaking of the whole range of x-ray studies available today. The list is very long. Doctors seem very willing to use all the new technology and patients often ask that certain tests be done that they have heard about.

THE CAT SCAN

The subject today is the CAT scan. By the way CAT is short for computed axial tomography. But you already knew that, right? Sure.

CT is not new by any means, but are you aware that there is a significant x-ray exposure with CT studies? The patient is scanned with x-rays and the computer makes 3 dimensional images of organs that provide far greater detail than plain films.

For example, a CT exam of the chest exposes the patient to more than 100 times the radiation you get from a standard chest x-ray. CT is often used in Emergency Room settings to get information quickly about head injuries and abdominal problems.

Our intention is not to frighten patients away from a test that could possibly provide a lifesaving diagnosis. When a scan is done the right way for the right reason the benefits clearly outweigh the risk of doing it.

I want my patients to be educated and realize it is OK to ask questions. In order to make sure you are not subjected to unnecessary radiation, please do the following.

1. Listen to your doctor if he or she says a scan may not be necessary. Don't insist that one be done because it would make you feel reassured.
2. Keep careful track of how many CT exams you have had and make sure your doctor is aware of your history.
3. Ask your physician whether a scan is absolutely necessary or whether another diagnostic test might work instead.
4. If you are healthy, don't have a full body scan to screen for hidden problems.

Office Website and Argus Orthopaedic Zone Archive

What if I told you all the Orthopaedic and Musculoskeletal information you need is in one place?

The place is online at www.orthopodsurgeon.com. It contains:
The office website Library of Articles
Your Orthopaedic Connection
Argus Orthopaedic Zone Archive of all previous articles.

That is a huge amount of information that can be very useful to you, family and friends. Please check all of this out.

It is a wealth of information about all the things I treat in the office and hospital. I specialize in you.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives. Call if you need me. I specialize in you.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush