

Pediatric Sinus CT 
Test Request Tip Sheet


- The primary use of sinus CT scans is to help manage chronic sinusitis.
 - Thus, a sinus CT for sinusitis is appropriate ONLY after completion of a trial of observation to rule out the most common cause, viral rhinosinusitis.
 - This must be followed by a trial of medical (antihistamines) and antibiotic therapy without significant improvement in signs/symptoms.

- Routine imaging in children with acute sinusitis isn't recommended. (American Academy of Pediatrics)

- Performing CT imaging in children younger than 6 years of age isn't recommended. (American Academy of Pediatrics)

- Brain/sinus CT combination studies are rarely indicated, since a brain CT almost always provides adequate views of the sinuses.

Radiation Exposure

Sinus CT: 4 mSv 

Radiation exposure should be limited whenever possible.

With and without contrast doubles the radiation dose.

We follow Choosing Wisely recommendations for radiographic monitoring of rhinosinusitis including plain films.

Choosing Wisely Recommendations

As part of Choosing Wisely, each participating specialty society has created lists of "Things Physicians and Patients Should Question" that provide specific, evidence-based recommendations that physicians and patients should discuss to help make wise decisions about the most appropriate care based on their individual situations. The items below represent the recommendations associated with sinus CT.

- **Don't order sinus CT or indiscriminately prescribe antibiotics for uncomplicated acute rhinosinusitis.** (American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology)
- **Don't routinely obtain radiographic imaging for patients who meet diagnostic criteria for uncomplicated acute rhinosinusitis. Imaging of the paranasal sinuses, including plain film radiography, CT, and MRI is unnecessary in patients who meet the clinical diagnostic criteria for uncomplicated acute rhinosinusitis.** (American Academy of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery Foundation)

Choosing Wisely® is an initiative of the ABIM Foundation to help physicians and patients engage in conversations about the overuse of tests and procedures and support physician efforts to help patients make smart and effective care choices. Recognizing the importance of physicians and patients working together, leading specialty societies, along with *Consumer Reports*, have joined Choosing Wisely to help improve the quality and safety of health care in America.