

What is an X-Ray?

"I understand we're going to do your right knee."

An X-ray is a test that uses radiation to make pictures of bones, joints, and organs inside your body. Dense tissues like your bones absorb more radiation, so they look white on the image. Thinner tissues, like muscles, blood, and fat, absorb less radiation, so they show up gray.

"X-rays are very useful. We use them often to look at bones for things like fractures or arthritis. We also use them a lot to look at your lungs for things like pneumonia."-Dr. Aaron Hattaway, MD, Radiologist

Before the X-ray, you may be asked to change into a gown, depending on the area being examined. You might also be asked to remove jewelry and other items containing metal that could show up on the image. X-rays expose you to some radiation, so a lead apron may be used to shield parts of your body that aren't being x-rayed. Though the amount of radiation from a single X-ray is small and the test is safe, repeated exposures could slightly increase your risk for cancer.

"If you're pregnant, it's always a good idea to make sure that someone taking the X-rays knows, so they can appropriately shield you and take measures to keep that exposure as low as possible."- Dr. Aaron Hattaway, MD, Radiologist

During the test, you'll either lie on a table or stand.

"We're ready. Don't move."

You'll have to hold still while the X-ray is taken. The whole test takes about 15 minutes. After, it's finished, you can go home.

"If your results are normal, you may not need to do anything else, but if the test picks up a problem, you may need additional tests. You should be sure and ask your provider so that they can give you guidance as to additional tests, treatments or any other follow up that you may need."- Dr. Aaron Hattaway, MD, Radiologist