**DIGITAL XRAY FAQs**

*What are x-rays?*

X-rays are a type of ionising radiation used to take images of the human body. They pass through the body to create a 2D black and white image determined by how many x-rays are absorbed and how many pass through.

*Are x-rays safe?*

The doctor who has requested your x-rays has done so with the knowledge that the benefits of finding a diagnosis outweigh any harm from the small doses of radiation used. The medical imaging technologist who performs your x-rays is highly trained in the ‘ALARA principle’, which stands for ‘as low as reasonably achievable’. This means the lowest radiation dose possible will be used in order to provide diagnostic images for our radiologist to review.

More information on ionising radiation and health can be found here:

<http://www.arpansa.gov.au/radiationprotection/Factsheets/is_ionising.cfm>

*Why does the technologist leave the room?*

The medical imaging technologist operates the x-ray machine from behind a console located in the x-ray room. This is shielded by lead which blocks x-rays, as the cumulative dose of radiation to the technologist who performs multiple x-rays a day over multiple years of their career would be harmful.

*What if I’m pregnant?*

If you are pregnant or think you might be please advise your doctor and the medical imaging technologist before your x-rays. There is risk of radiation damage to the developing foetus and so an alternative test may be recommended. If the x-rays are deemed medically necessary by the doctor, lead shielding can be used to reduce this risk.

*Do I need to get changed?*

In general, you undress whatever part of your body needs examination and will be given a gown to change into as necessary. Depending on the area you are having x-rayed you may want to wear loose, comfortable clothing which is easy to move around in. You may also be asked to remove jewellery, glasses and other metallic items so they do not show up on the x-ray.

*How long will it take?*

Most examinations take less than 15 minutes.

*How much will it cost?*

Private patients will be charged a reasonable fee dependent on the area requested by your doctor to be x-rayed. All potential fees associated with a referred exam will be discussed with you prior to confirming a booking. If you are registered with Medicare they will reimburse a percentage of the fee.

X-rays which are bulk-billled (no cost) include:

* patients who hold a valid pension or concession card
* chiropractic spine x-rays
* OPGs

*Can I use my private health insurance?*

Generally speaking, private medical imaging procedures are only covered if you are an inpatient in a private hospital. Please check with your private health provider, as different policies offer different levels of cover.

*Can I bring a relative or friend to my x-ray appointment?*

Yes, however due to safety reasons they will generally be asked to remain outside for the duration of your x-rays. Protective lead gowns are provided to parents who are required to accompany small children for x-ray examinations.

*What happens to my results?*

The x-rays taken are reviewed by our radiologist who is the specialist doctor onsite at Radius. A report is made based on any findings and sent to your doctor within 24-48 hours. Urgent x-rays may be able to be reviewed at the time of your appointment.