



MEMORANDUM

TO: Health care providers, Eastern Health

FROM: Dr. Angela Pickle, Chief Radiologist, Medical Imaging Program
Dr. Jeff Flemming, NMM Radiologist, Medical Imaging Program
Julie Larouz, Regional Director Medical Imaging, Eastern Health

DATE: March 31st, 2020

RE: **Medical Imaging PET and Nuclear Medicine Service Covid-19**

- PET program during COVID-19 pandemic update.

We have continued to have difficulty maintaining a reliable supply of radiopharmaceuticals for the Nuclear Medicine department. This includes explicitly Fluorodeoxyglucose (FDG) for Positron Emission Tomography (PET) imaging. Since we are transporting FDG from Toronto daily, alterations in the airline schedule can have deleterious effects on our ability to provide the service. We have now been told that there are likely to be daily changes to this schedule, and in fact there are no appropriate flights until Wednesday, April 1st, 2020. This will result in a decreased level of service for the foreseeable future. We are having ongoing discussions with the airline to attempt to clarify their plan going forward.

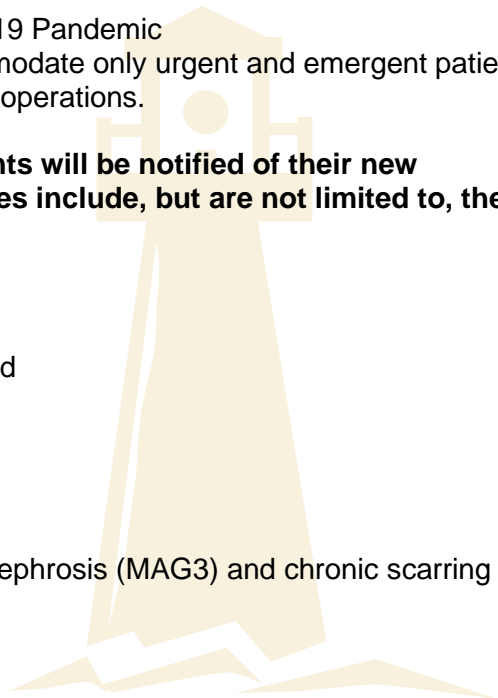
We will update when we have additional information; however, until then, it may be preferable to arrange alternative imaging for patients, such as CT or MRI, to avoid having patients wait an extended period for therapy.

- Changes to the Nuclear Medicine Service during COVID-19 Pandemic

Based on the recent Eastern Health recommendations to accommodate only urgent and emergent patients during this time, there have been some changes to departmental operations.

All non-urgent studies are delayed until further notice. Patients will be notified of their new appointments once that situation has stabilized. These studies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- H. Pylori
- BMD
- Myocardial perfusion imaging, non-urgent
- Thyroid scans for those who are mildly hyperthyroid
- Bone scans, non-urgent
- 131I scans, follow up
- VQ scans, routine for follow-up/baseline
- IDA scans, chronic symptoms
- Parathyroid scans
- Renal scans including those for monitoring hydronephrosis (MAG3) and chronic scarring (DMSA)
- Dacroscentigraphy
- Gastric Emptying



The following studies will proceed;

- Myocardial perfusion imaging, urgent
 - Thyroid scans, before thyroid cancer treatment or for Grave's disease
 - Bone scans, for cancer patients or osteomyelitis. White Blood Cell scans are also available
 - 131I and 223Ra treatments
 - VQ scans for acute PE although may be performed without the ventilation component of the study depending on the situation, which will be discussed with the referring physician at the time of ordering. VQ scans for Chronic Thromboembolic Pulmonary Hypertension can be performed if the result will alter management
 - IDA scan for acute cholecystitis, leak or other urgent indications
 - Renal scans required for urgent management decisions (DTPA GFR)
 - MUGA for patients on chemotherapy or other urgent indication
 - Sentinel Node Studies
 - MIBG and Octreotide
 - Red Blood Cell scan for Gastrointestinal Bleed and Meckel's scan
 - Brain Death scan
 - Ventriculoperitoneal shunt studies
- **If you have a patient that requires one of those studies identified as non-urgent, and are concerned that it might not be performed in a timely fashion because of these restrictions, please contact the department directly or the nuclear medicine physician on call.**