

Student Pregnancy and Radiation Safety Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to minimize radiation exposure to the developing embryo/fetus of a student who has declared pregnancy and is assigned in or near clinical areas that routinely utilize radiation.

Policy

Reasonable measures will be taken by clinical affiliate sites and the College of Health Sciences to reduce exposure to radiation for students who have made a written declaration of pregnancy.

Procedure

State regulations require healthcare institutions in which a risk of radiation exposure exists to take reasonable measures to limit the exposure of employees, volunteers and students to radiation. These regulations allow a pregnant woman to decide whether she wants to formally declare her pregnancy to take advantage of lower dose limits for the embryo/fetus.

1. The choice to declare pregnancy is completely voluntary. If a student chooses to declare her pregnancy, she must do so in writing on the Declaration of Pregnancy form so that a lower radiation dose limit will apply to the embryo/fetus. If the student chooses not to declare her pregnancy, she and her embryo/fetus will continue to be subject to the same radiation dose limits that apply to other occupational workers.
2. A student who has declared pregnancy will be issued a radiation monitor (fetal badge) to be worn at the waist at all times and under the protective apron when an apron is worn. If the student is assigned in an area that requires all employees to wear a radiation monitor, the fetal badge will be in addition to this.
3. The dose of the fetal badge cannot exceed 0.5 rem (5 millisievert) during the entire pregnancy. If the pregnant student has already received a dose exceeding 0.5 rem in the period between conception and the declaration of pregnancy, an additional dose of 0.05 rem (0.5 millisievert) is allowed during the remainder of the pregnancy. In addition the clinical site must make efforts to avoid substantial variation above a uniform monthly dose rate so all the allowed dose does not occur in a short period during the pregnancy.
4. If these limits are exceeded, temporary reassignment of the student or a leave of absence may be necessary. All options will be discussed with the student and reviewed by the Medical Director and the Radiation Safety Officer for a final decision regarding the appropriate actions to be taken.