

An illustration of a stylized owl perched on a thick, brown tree branch. The owl has a grey body with dark grey wings and a white face with large, round eyes and a small orange beak. The tree branch is textured and extends across the top and left side of the page. The background is white with some light blue clouds and green foliage at the bottom.

Image Wisely Focuses on Dose Reduction in Adults

BY MATTHEW ROBB, B.S., AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RADIOLOGY FREELANCE WRITER

At the Radiological Society of North America Scientific Assembly and Annual Meeting, Nov. 28-Dec. 3, the American College of Radiology/RSNA Joint Task Force on Adult Radiation Protection will launch Image Wisely, a high-visibility campaign that seeks to deepen understanding of adult radiation protection among radiologists, referring practitioners, medical physicists and radiologic technologists. While the educational component is sweeping in scope, perhaps even more noteworthy is the Image Wisely call to action.

ASRT Chief Operating Officer Greg Morrison, M.A., R.T.(R), CNMT, CAE, sees the nation's 300,000 registered technologists as central to dose reduction. "As the final imaging professional who can make a difference before exposure, it's the technologist's

responsibility to take an active role and ensure that dose is reduced through every means possible," he said.

"Radiation awareness has increased exponentially in the last few years, but now Image Wisely is asking stakeholders to actually commit — by pledging their support and utilizing the radiation safety resources available on its new website," said James A. Brink, M.D., FACR, chairman of diagnostic radiology at Yale School of Medicine. Dr. Brink cochairs the Image Wisely Joint Task Force with E. Stephen Amis Jr., M.D., FACR, the chairman of radiology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Image Wisely is a collaborative effort of four charter members: ASRT, ACR, RSNA and the American Association of Physicists in Medicine. Image Wisely follows on the remarkable success of Image Gently, which since its January 2007 start continues to focus attention on safe imaging of pediatric patients.

"Image Wisely seeks to raise awareness of opportunities to eliminate unnecessary imaging examinations and to lower radiation in necessary imaging examinations to only that needed to acquire appropriate medical images," Dr. Brink noted. "Initially, the campaign will focus on computed tomography, but will broaden to include nuclear medicine procedures, fluoroscopy and radiography," said medical physicist William R. Hendee, Ph.D., FACR, distinguished professor of radiology at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Through education and networking, the Joint Task Force anticipates the campaign will significantly expand participation among affiliated health care organizations, educational institutions, government agencies and vendors. The campaign logo, a wise owl, is expected to give Image Wisely instant brand recognition.


Imaging stakeholders will have at their fingertips an exceptional array of electronic and print resources, including a new, state-of-the-art website linked to www.radiologyinfo.org for patient information. This highly successful website, cosponsored by ACR and RSNA, will give patients and the general public an interactive resource guide outlining the benefits of medical imaging in relation to the risks of

exposure to ionizing radiation. In addition, the Image Wisely website will provide links to vendor microsites that outline dose-reduction techniques on specific equipment. Combined, these user-friendly resources — described as "the best of the best" by Dr. Amis — will foster greater insight among imaging professionals, patients and the public at large, while underscoring the reality that radiation dose in adult imaging requires further study and is affected by numerous factors.

In its calls to action, Image Wisely will ask stakeholders (individuals and groups) to demonstrate their involvement by electronically signing formal online pledge cards "that demonstrate their commitment to the campaign's overarching principles," Dr. Amis said.

Dr. Amis also encourages facilities to enroll in ACR accreditation programs and participate in national dose index registries. Dr. Brink noted that the ACR has "a vigorous radiation protection process as part of its CT accreditation program," and said ACR Appropriateness Criteria enhance quality of care by providing evidence-based guidelines so that referring practitioners and other professionals can make the most appropriate imaging decision for a specific clinical condition.

Image Wisely reminds all that the radiation received from medical imaging scans could, over time, have adverse effects, but these advanced technologies also save lives, reduce the need for surgery and speed recovery. "CT, nuclear medicine procedures, angiography and interventional imaging methods give us powerful tools, but do deliver fairly high doses of radiation. We, as medical physicists, need to ensure that the protocols we use are optimized according to the as low as reasonably achievable concept, without compromising quality," said Dr. Hendee.

A special interest session at the RSNA Annual Meeting will provide additional details about the Image Wisely campaign. 

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is being published in the member newsmagazines of the Image Wisely charter member organizations.