

Weill Cornell Imaging



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MEDICATION GUIDE

Gadolinium Based Contrast Agents (GBCAs)

WHAT IS A GADOLINIUM BASED CONTRAST AGENT (GBCA)?

A gadolinium-based contrast agent (GBCA) is a prescription medicine that is injected into your vein as part of your magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) examination. Using GBCAs with MRI helps our physicians see certain anatomy and problems better than an MRI exam without a GBCA. Your referring doctor and our radiologists have reviewed your medical records and have determined that you would benefit from using a GBCA with your MRI exam. The GBCAs used at our institution include Gadavist (gadobutrol), Eovist (gadoxetate disodium), Dotarem (gadoterate meglumine), and Multihance (gadobenate dimeglumine).

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GBCAS?

- GBCAs have been used extensively and safely for decades.
- In some persons, very small amounts of gadolinium can stay in your body including the brain, bones, skin and other parts of your body for months to years. To date, studies have not found harmful effects in patients with normal kidneys.
- People who get many doses of GBCAs, women who are pregnant, and young children may be at increased risk from gadolinium staying in the body.
- There are different GBCAs that can be used for your MRI exam. Our practice uses the type of GBCAs that are both best for providing the information needed from your MRI and are least likely to remain in your body.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF GBCAS?

- The most common side effects of GBCAs include headache, nausea, a warm sensation, and dizziness. These are mild and usually resolve quickly.
- GBCAs can cause allergic reactions. These are typically mild but rarely severe reactions do occur. Our imaging practice and our physicians are well equipped to deal with any reaction that may occur. **You should not receive a GBCA if you have had a serious allergic reaction to the same type of GBCA in the past.**

BEFORE RECEIVING A GBCA, TELL YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT ALL YOUR MEDICAL CONDITIONS, INCLUDING IF YOU:

- Are pregnant or think you could be pregnant. While there is no evidence that GBCAs can harm your unborn baby, we try to avoid the use of GBCAs while you are pregnant.
- Have had an allergic reaction to dyes (contrast agents) including GBCAs.