



Latest News

River Radiology is “stepping lightly”

When it comes to dosage of radiation for procedures, “Our objective is to use the lowest dose possible, while providing the highest quality image,” said Angie Rockwell, lead CT technologist. “According to research on the advanced CT scanners we use, doses that are lower than those previously recommended are still high in quality.”



River Radiology Technologists

It’s About Time

It’s common for many of us over 50 to think more about our health. For many of us that means being more proactive. And with today’s technology, learning more...sooner...can translate into better outcomes. At River Radiology we have the technology to perform certain screening exams, which are a proactive way of checking one’s health. Screening tests can detect various diseases and conditions for which symptoms may not yet be obvious, or help evaluate one’s risk for developing a specific disease.

We would like to help you understand these tests, and the ways in which the latest technology can help you be healthier. Education is an important component of one’s health. The more we know, the more we can prevent a problem; the more we know, the better the outcome.

With the information from your exam, your physician can discuss with you specific measures to take to improve your health, and reduce your risk of developing serious illnesses, such as heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, stroke, and other conditions.

In these newsletters we will discuss some new screening tests, and some that you are more familiar with. We will explain the technology and science behind them, who is a candidate for the tests, and details of the exams.

We encourage you to discuss these tests with your primary care physician, who can provide you with specific information that relates to your physical health. For all these tests, a referral from your primary care physician is required. Most screening exams ordered by your physician are covered by insurance. We can help you determine insurance coverage, and you can also check with your insurance carrier.

Please visit our website for more information on each of the procedures we discuss in this and upcoming newsletters: www.riverradiology.com

Don’t you think it’s about time to be more proactive?

*Jonathan Ahmadjian, MD
Susan K. Connors, MD
Thomas A. Koshy, MD*

*Bruce Moor, MD
Orin A. Rossett, MD*

*Steven Schwartz, MD
Gi Suk Song, MD*

Healthy Aging Hot Topic: Carotid Ultrasound Imaging

What do boats, dolphins, babies, bats and blood vessels have in common? Ultrasound.

Ultrasound imaging is similar to the sonar used by boats, dolphins and bats to detect objects. When a sound wave strikes an object, it bounces back or echoes. Many new parents are familiar with the first ultrasound images of their babies in the womb. This is possible by measuring the echo waves with a device called a transducer. The same ultrasound can also detect blood flow through a blood vessel.

Ultrasound imaging, also called ultrasound scanning or sonography, is a non invasive

medical test. It is painless. It involves exposing part of the body to high frequency sound waves that produce a picture of the inside of the body. Ultrasound exams do NOT use x-rays. There is no ionizing radiation during sonography.

The two carotid arteries, which are located on each side of the neck, carry blood from the heart to the brain. An ultrasound of these arteries provides detailed pictures of the blood vessels and the blood flowing through them. A Doppler ultrasound is a specific ultrasound technique that evaluates blood flow through a vessel.



Denise Thomas
Denise Thomas, Lead Ultrasound Technologist, RDMS, RVT, RDCS. Performing a Carotid Artery Ultrasound Screening Test

Next Issue:

Did you know the purpose of BMD (Bone Mineral Density) testing is to help predict the risk of future fractures? And like many other medical problems, risk factors include personal history, advanced age, and cigarette smoking. BUT, unlike many other health factors, risk of fractures are more likely in people with low body weight or thin body structure. Find out more about Bone Density screening in the next issue of Healthy Aging 50+ or go online to www.RiverRadiology.com/bonedensitometry.



Invest an hour in early screening. It can add years to your life.



Healthy Aging Hot Topic: Carotid Ultrasound Imaging

Why do an Ultrasound of the Carotid Arteries?

The carotid arteries are the main blood supply lines to the brain. The buildup of a fatty substance called plaque can partially or completely block these arteries. This blockage, if severe, can significantly increase the risk of stroke.

This narrowing or stenosis of the carotid artery is a condition that substantially increases the risk of stroke. The major goal of carotid ultrasound is to screen patients for blockage or narrowing of their carotid arteries. Once the diagnosis is made, a comprehensive treatment may be initiated.

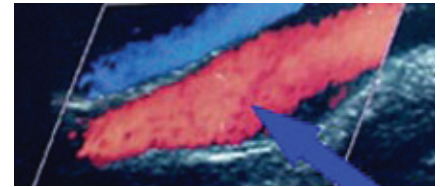
A carotid ultrasound is also performed to

- locate a hematoma, a collection of clotted blood that may slow and eventually stop blood flow.
- detect dissection of the carotid artery, which is a split between layers of the artery wall that may lead to obstruction of blood flow or a weakening of the wall of the artery.
- evaluate blockages (clots) to blood flow

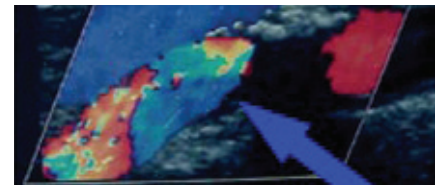
Who Should Have Ultrasound Test of Carotid Arteries?

The number one reason for this test is a recommendation of your physician. Discuss the test with your physician if you have any of these risk factors:

- Personal or family history of stroke, heart attack, or TIA
- Age 55 or older
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Cigarette smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke
- Diabetes
- Overweight or obese
- Cardiovascular disease, including heart failure, heart defect, or abnormal heart rhythm



carotid artery showing normal blood flow



carotid artery showing abnormal blood flow

The Procedure Explained:

Wear a comfortable, loose, open-necked shirt or blouse. No other preparation is necessary.

The patient is positioned lying face-up on an examination table. A clear, water-based gel is applied to the neck. This helps transmit the Ultrasound beam into the patient's body. (The transducer is a small hand-held device that resembles a microphone, attached by a cord to the ultrasound scanner next to the exam table.) The ultrasound technologist then presses the transducer firmly against the skin on the neck, sweeping over the area. It may be necessary to tilt or rotate your head for the best exposure. Your head will be supported to keep it still.

The examination is complete, usually within half an hour.

Benefits vs. Risks

There are no known risks. Benefits include:

- Non invasive, painless
- Less expensive than other imaging procedures
- NO ionizing radiation involved
- Clear picture of soft tissues and blood vessels
- May prevent strokes