

## Gadolinium Contrast and Your MRI

Gadolinium (gad-o-LIN-ee-um) is a special contrast we use for *some* of our MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) exams. Gadolinium improves the quality of the MRI images for different types of organs, tissues, and blood vessels. Gadolinium is one of the *safest contrast agents* that we use at Cook Children's.

*Not all MRI exams need Gadolinium contrast.*

### If we use Gadolinium contrast

1. First we review your medical history and health condition.

**Please tell us about any medical conditions, including:**

- If you are pregnant, or think you could be pregnant.
- All known allergies.
- Date of your last MRI exam with contrast.
- If you have had more than one MRI with contrast.
- If you have end stage renal (kidney) disease with dialysis.

2. The doctor will choose the type and amount of Gadolinium you need. We give Gadolinium by an IV (placing a very tiny tube in the vein).

**Allergic reactions:** MRI contrast can sometimes cause an allergic reaction. This is rare, but we will watch you closely for signs of a reaction during the MRI exam.

### Possible long-term effects of Gadolinium

**Kidney disease:** People with a kidney disease receiving gadolinium contrast may develop a condition called "nephrogenic systemic fibrosis". This rare condition results in severe thickening of the skin, organs, and tissues in the body.

**Gadolinium has been found to stay in several parts of the body for months or years.**

- The possible long-term effects of Gadolinium have not yet been determined.
- *To date, all studies have found no harmful effects from gadolinium in the body.*

Your questions about the MRI exam or Gadolinium contrast are important.  
Please discuss any questions or concerns with the MRI Technologist before your exam.