

Information for Referring Clinicians

Northern Health Medical Imaging sites have adopted appropriateness criteria for MRI knee and hip exams. These criteria are consistent with the Choosing Wisely Canada recommendations.

How will appropriateness criteria be implemented?

An appropriateness checklist has been developed to accompany adult MRI knee and hip referrals. The checklist must be completed and attached to the MRI requisition.

Why introduce appropriateness criteria?

The appropriateness criteria and checklist provide decision support to referring clinicians and support our commitment to quality improvement.

What does this mean for referring clinicians?

- Referring clinicians must complete and attach a knee and hip checklist to their MRI requisition for patients 40 years of age and older.
- The requisition and checklist must be forwarded to the MRI office together.

What are the appropriateness criteria for MRI knee and hip?

One or more of the following must apply to be eligible for MRI knee or hip:

- ✓ MRI was recommended on a previous imaging report
- ✓ Previous knee or hip surgery
- ✓ Suspected infection
- ✓ Suspected tumour
- ✓ Acute/subacute trauma
- ✓ Osteonecrosis
- ✓ Fixed or locked knee
- ✓ Patient has had a weight-bearing x-ray within the past 6 months and referring clinician has confirmed mild or no evidence of osteoarthritis in the knee or hip

What should I discuss with my patients if they don't meet the appropriateness criteria?

- Having an X-ray can inform the appropriate investigation pathway.
- In the absence of red flag appropriateness criteria, there is no evidence for the utility of advanced imaging for patients with significant OA.
- Discuss treatment and pain management options.
- Provide them with the "MRI for Knee and Hip - when it is appropriate?" patient handout.
- Continue to monitor your patient and if their symptoms don't resolve, consider consulting orthopedic and rheumatology specialists as there may be other reasons for your patient's pain.

MRI Central Intake

In addition to the regional MRI requisition form, referrals for lumbar spine, knee, and hip must include the regional appropriateness checklist.

Both the forms are available at:

- **11-210-5048 UHNBC use only**
- **10-210-5048 Regional**

Fax requisition and appropriateness checklist to the MRI preferred exam site:

Fort St John: 250-261-7637
Terrace: 250-638-4077
Prince George: 250-565-5877

Resources

Appropriateness criteria are consistent with the Choosing Wisely Canada recommendations. For more information, visit <https://choosingwiselycanada.org>

For appropriateness guidance from a radiologist, call the Northern Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise (Northern RACE) line: 1-855-605-7223

[Northern RACE](#) (Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise) is an advice line to support primary care providers in Northern BC. Northern specialist physicians will provide telephone support for non-emergent, patient-related questions. For more generic information, please visit the [RACE connect website](#)

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