

Chest X-Ray



Radiology is a procedure that allows doctors to take images of the structures that are inside the body and that normally cannot be seen. X-rays are a form of radiation that penetrates the body's structure and then can be developed on special film that captures the X-rays. For a chest X-ray, a very small amount of radiation is used to produce an image of the structures of the chest (heart, lungs and bones) on an X-ray film.

- Chest X-rays are used primarily to help diagnose diseases affecting the

- heart and lungs. They may also be used to evaluate bone problems in the chest, ribs and middle part of the back.
- They are also used to evaluate the placement of special intravenous catheters that are placed in the chest cavity. In addition, they may be used to evaluate the placement of other medical devices in the chest, such as endotracheal tubes that are used when patients cannot breathe on their own. Other medical devices, such as pacemakers and internal defibrillators, can also be seen and evaluated in a chest X-ray.

What to expect:

- Chest X-rays may be performed at some doctor's offices, special outpatient radiology centers, or at the hospital. Chest X-rays may be taken with a portable device next to the patient's bed in special situations, but generally they are done in a special radiology room.
- You will need to wear clothes that do not have metal parts (zippers, snaps, etc.). If necessary, you will be given a robe to put on. You must take off all jewelry that is over the chest.
- A very small amount of radiation will be used to take images of the structures inside the chest.
- Generally, two X-rays are taken. The first is taken from back to front. You will be asked to stay very still, standing with the chest against the cassette containing the X-ray film. You will be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds while the X-ray is taken for the image not to come out blurry.
- The second one will be taken with your left side against the cassette.

The whole process takes 10 to 15 minutes.

Preparation:

- No special preparation is necessary.

Tell the technician if you are pregnant.