

### **Radiation Safety program begins June 27, 2011**

Diagnostic imaging is a common tool in the prevention and diagnosis of numerous conditions, injuries and diseases. With the advances in radiology, cumulative radiation exposure is a growing concern among physicians and their patients. However, while there are no safety rules covering the radiation exposure for patients, physicians are asked to follow the principle of As Little As Reasonably Achievable (ALARA).

As a way to raise awareness of radiation exposure that patients receive during diagnostic imaging, Independent Health and National Imaging Associates (NIA) are expanding their radiation safety program.

Beginning on June 27, 2011, a special screen will appear on RadMD.com when physicians request pre-authorization for diagnostic radiology services if their patients have been exposed to at least 50 milliSieverts (mSv) of radiation, using Independent Health claims data. However, the level of radiation **will not** be a factor during the pre-authorization process for radiology.

Please see the sample screen shot below for an example of the information that will appear for a patient who has exceeded 50 mSv.

Because the cumulative effects of radiation exposure increase the risk of serious medical conditions, we believe it is appropriate to alert physicians when their patients have reached higher-than-normal radiation exposure.

We encourage you to review this information with your staff who may order the test on your behalf. Additional information about radiation safety is available at RadMD.com. If you have any questions, please call Independent Health's provider services at (716) 631-3282.

#### **Environmental radiation exposure (per year)**

Average US exposure/person/year:	6.2 mSv
Jet airplane flight:	0.005 mSv per hour
Cigarette smoking, half-pack per day:	0.18 mSv
Stone, adobe, brick or concrete building:	0.7 mSv

#### **Radiation dose of Common Medical Procedures**

Chest X-ray	0.02 - 0.1 mSv
Mammogram	0.42 mSv
CT head:	2 mSv
CT chest:	7 mSv
Ct abdomen/pelvis	10 mSv
CT spine:	10 mSv
Nuclear stress test	12 - 16 mSv
Cardiac CT scan	8 - 12 mSv