

TO: Vermont Health Care Providers, Hospitals, and Imaging Centers
FROM: Mark Levine, MD, Commissioner of Health

Iodinated Contrast Media Shortage

SITUATION:

There is a temporary, global shortage of GE Healthcare's iodinated intravenous contrast media expected to last at least through June 2022, resulting in an approximately 80% reduction in materials.

GE is the supplier of intravenous contrast media used for specific computed tomography and radiographic imaging modalities used in numerous U.S. hospitals and imaging centers.

Conservation of contrast material through various means over the next few months is necessary to avoid exhausting the available supply. Many sites have less than a week's supply under conventional use rates.

REQUESTED ACTIONS:

- Evaluate the amount of on-hand inventory and monitor at least weekly.
- Seek other means of securing contrast media, including alternate wholesalers and distributors.
- Develop protocols that include alternative imaging modalities for select presentations, such as ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging, where available.
- Review appropriateness criteria with radiologists, emergency medicine physicians, surgeons, and others to identify CT studies that may reasonably be performed without the use of IV contrast.
- Consider adjusting scanning protocols to scan without contrast and injector protocols to reduce the amount of contrast dose where appropriate.
- Collaborate with imaging technologists on innovative opportunities for conservation of contrast media to limit waste.
- Work with ordering providers and radiologists to identify non-urgent imaging requiring intravenous contrast material that may be deferred if efforts at contrast conservation are inadequate to allow all indicated studies to proceed.
- If the contrast supply is inadequate for clinical needs despite the above efforts at contrast conservation and deferral of non-urgent studies, develop transparent prioritization criteria that maximize clinical benefit of use of contrasted studies.
- Engage in regular communication with referring physicians, radiologists, and imaging staff.

Ordering providers should be aware that imaging locations have variable resources and will thus differ in the choices available to your patients. Additionally, the options at a given site may periodically evolve. Please refer to messaging from the specific imaging location for details.

SELECTED RESOURCES:

- <https://www.acr.org/Advocacy-and-Economics/ACR-Position-Statements/Contrast-Media-Shortage> <https://www.gnyha.org/news/ge-contrast-media-shortage-and-conservation-strategies/>
- <https://www.choosingwisely.org/societies/american-college-of-radiology/>
- <https://media.supplyrisk.com/post/1296/>

If you have any questions, please contact the HAN Coordinator at 802-859-5900 or vthan@vermont.gov.

HAN Message Type Definitions

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Info Service Message: Provides general correspondence from VDH, which is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.