



Clinical Alert – CT Contrast Shortage

Radiology Program

AIM has been made aware of a possible temporary iodinated contrast shortage, specifically involving GE Healthcare’s iodinated contrast media (Omnipaque™) stemming from a manufacturing facility lockdown in Shanghai, China. Iodinated contrast is used to provide enhancement of organs, tissues, and blood vessels for CT scans. GE estimates an 80 percent reduction in the supply of Omnipaque for about 6–8 weeks.

The Greater New York Hospital Association recently published potential conservation strategies for providers and imaging facilities to consider (<https://www.gnyha.org/news/ge-contrast-media-shortage-and-conservation-strategies/>), including evaluating imaging requests and protocols for appropriate use of contrast media.

What is AIM doing to address the contrast shortage?

AIM management focuses on the appropriateness of the modality. We leave decisions about whether to perform that modality with or without contrast to the radiologist/rendering provider.

For indications that cannot be adequately imaged by non-contrast CT, alternative advanced imaging modalities may be appropriate. Many AIM guideline indications have allowances for MRI and/or PET/CT “when CT cannot be performed or is non-diagnostic,” which would include scenarios such as this when contrast CT cannot be performed (and non-contrast CT is expected to be non-diagnostic).

Requests for alternative imaging made under such circumstances should include this detail (eg “iodinated contrast for CT is not available”) in the submitted prior authorization request, either by peer-to-peer discussion or via the free text entry option for online web portal requests.

This alert is being provided for informational purposes only and should not be relied upon for legal or regulatory guidance.