

# Paediatric Radiology and the Nurse

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NURSE'S role in Paediatric Radiology is two-fold ; (1) that of a nurse (2) that of a specialist. Radiology demands specialised training in the intricacies of the various procedures and paediatric radiology much more so. In Western countries nearly 95 per cent of the technicians in hospitals are females and hence all of the technicians' part and much of the nurses' part are borne by them ; in our country it is the other way round. Male technicians are in greater majority and a dire need is felt for a qualified nurse with specialised training in Paediatric Radiology.

## Nurse in Nurse's role

The demands in this category are many as expected of a qualified nurse. (a) to keep the department tidy, hygienic and attractive, (b) to look to the needs of the patients referred to the department, both out-patients and in-patients (c) to differentiate between fairly sick patients, very sick patients and patients who are listed as emergencies and suitably advise the technicians to whom to give priority attention in disposing of the patients.

## Nurse in the role of a specialist

In this role, the nurse should be in a position to advise her nursing colleagues in the wards as to the preparations that are obligatory before each radiological procedures.

1. To give a cleaning enema for older children before intravenous pyelogram, barium meal and enema procedures.

2. To starve the children prior to barium meal, intravenous pyelogram and other vascular radiographic procedures or procedure which entail general anaesthesia.

3. Not to starve the children before Barium enema, sinogram and fistulograms.

4. Special preparations that are to be adopted before cholecystographic and cholangiographic procedures.

5. Preparation of sites to observe asepsis in certain percutaneous procedures such as splenoportogram and femoral arteriogram.

Advise colleagues about the sensitivity tests in cases where contrast agents are used such as intravenous pyelogram cholangiogram and vascular radiography.

7. Supplying to the wards or surgical theatres the correct type and suitable amount of contrast material such as dionosil in bronchogram, diginol in retrograde pyelogram and telepaque tablets for oral cholecystography.

8. Restraining of the children during radiographic exposure is an art and the nurse can give a good deal of help to the technician to restrain the children so that movements of the children do not hamper the examination. There are certain improvised methods such as slipping of stokinets into the child's arm and binding the legs with crape bandage which are simple yet effective procedures.

9. Nurse is to be well versed with certain minor but important procedures like putting a nasal catheter, gastric tube special catheter for small intestinal study, Foley catheter to the bladder, rectum and colostomy openings.

10. Take very active part in certain radiological procedures such as Oesophageal study, contrast study in a case of pyloric stenosis malrotation.

11. Observe radiation protection to herself, colleagues, in the department, patients and patient's relatives. The nurse should know the various radiation protection measures that are adopted in the department such as wearing of the film badge which serves as monitoring, protect herself with lead apron and gloves and not to be in the direct path of X-rays at any stage. Nurses should know the risks that are attended with unnecessary radiation so that she can be on guard and resort to measures such as periodic blood count and compulsory leave for one month after every 11 months of work.

It may appear that these manifold duties are too demanding for even a trained nurse but in actual practice it is not so.

We have in our department of Radiology at this children's Hospital a qualified nurse who has been doing Paediatric Radiological Nursing for over 4 years and who fulfils the above criteria in large measure; she is fond of children and infuses motherly love in them ; she keeps the department clean, tidy, and is very meticulous in her work ; she has learnt over the years the radiological procedures and is a great source of practical help in complicated procedures such as voiding systograms and reduction of intussusception. She is in a position to advise her nursing colleagues about the precautions, dosage, probable risks, and preparations for the various radiological procedures ; she knows the radiation protective measures and practises them to the utmost detail. She does all that is required and expected of a Paediatric Radiological Nurse and is in short "Intellectual help" duty conscious and service with a smile" all rolled into one, Nurses of this type are an asset to the department and with their added knowledge of the speciality the task of the Radiologist is quite simplified and could be quite rewarding. □

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