

GADOLINIUM CONTRAST IN MRI

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

A gadolinium-based contrast agent (GBCA) is a clear contrast fluid that we inject into a vein during MRI scans to better detect medical problems. For over 30 years, GBCAs have been used in over 450 million patients worldwide to improve their MRI scans. The brand of GBCA most commonly used at Penn Medicine is Dotarem or Eovist. They have determined to be safe and effective by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). An FDA medication guide is available to help you better understand GBCAs.

Benefits of GBCA:

GBCA's are often ordered to help identify areas of abnormality including tumors, inflammation, vascular abnormalities and infection.

Potential Side Effects:

Most common (seen in up to 4 in 100 people):

Coldness or pain at injection site, mild headache, nausea, itching, or hives.

Rare (seen in up to 1 in 10,000 patients):

Difficulty breathing or facial swelling requiring medical treatment. Please note that severe or life-threatening reactions are extremely rare.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

All MRI contrast agents contain a metal called gadolinium.

Small amounts of gadolinium can stay in the body for several months to years. This is much less with the contrast agents used at Penn Medicine, which are among the most stable agents. Importantly, no harmful health effects related to gadolinium retention have been shown at this time.

Nephrogenic Systemic Fibrosis (NSF) is a disease that rarely occurs in patients with severe kidney problems. To date, no cases of NSF have been reported since switching to stable agents.

MRI Contrast Agents:

Dotarem – Active ingredient - gadoterate meglumine; inactive ingredients - DOTA, water. www.guerbet-us.com

Eovist – Active ingredient - gadoxetate disodium; inactive ingredients - caloxetate trisodium, trometamol, hydrochloric acid and /or sodium hydroxide, water. www.eovist.com

For questions or concerns, contact the radiology department where you had your imaging completed.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE:

- » If you have had a prior reaction to MRI contrast, please tell the technologist.
- » Please notify the technologist if you are or think you may be pregnant.
- » It is very rare to have long-term side effects directly linked to gadolinium injections.

