Medical radiation exposures for diagnostic radiology in Malaysia

Type: Article

Abstract:
The medical radiation usage for diagnostic radiology in Malaysia (a Level II country) for 1990-1994 is reported, enabling a comparison to be made for the first time with the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation Report. In 1994, the number of physicians, radiologists, x-ray units, and x-ray examinations per 1,000 population was 0.45, 0.005, 0.065, and 183, respectively. (Level I countries had averages of 2.6, 0.072, 0.35, and 860, respectively). In 1994, a total of 3.6 million x-ray examinations were performed; the annual effective dose per capita to the population was 0.05 mSv, and the collective effective dose aas 1,000 person-Sv. Chest examinations contributed 63% of the total. Almost all examinations experienced increasing frequency from 1990 to 1994 except for barium studies, cholecystography, and intravenous urography (-23%, -36%, -51%). These decreases are related to the increasing use of ultrasound and greater availability of fiberoptic endoscopy. Notable increases during the same period were observed in computed tomography (161%), cardiac procedures (190%), and mammography (240%). In order to progress from Level II to Level I status Malaysia needs to expand and upgrade radiological service in tandem with the health care development of the country.

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