

Diagnostic Imaging Pathways - Chest X-Ray (Pre-Operative)

Population Covered By The Guidance

This pathway provides guidance on the appropriate use of preoperative chest radiographs in adult patients.

Date reviewed: March 2018

Date of next review: March 2021

Published: May 2018

Quick User Guide

Move the mouse cursor over the **PINK** text boxes inside the flow chart to bring up a pop up box with salient points.

Clicking on the **PINK** text box will bring up the full text.

The relative radiation level (RRL) of each imaging investigation is displayed in the pop up box.

SYMBOL



RRL

None

Minimal

Low

Medium

High

EFFECTIVE DOSE RANGE

0

< 1 millisieverts

1-5 mSv

5-10 mSv

>10 mSv

Pathway Diagram

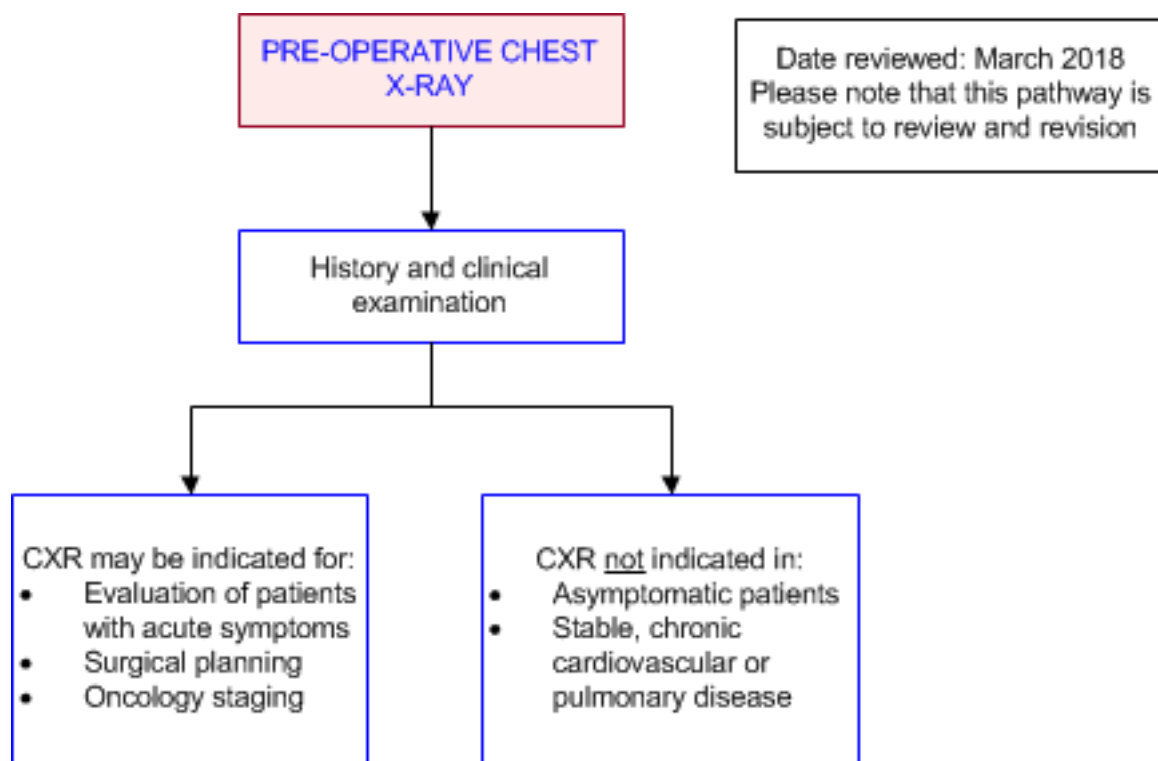


Image Gallery

Note: Images coming soon.

Teaching Points

Take Home Point

- Routine CXR is not indicated in the pre-anaesthetic assessment of asymptomatic patients [1-6](#)
- Preoperative CXR for anaesthetic evaluation should be based on history and clinical examination, and should be reserved for patients with symptoms of acute illness requiring investigation [1, 2](#)
- CXR may be indicated for surgical planning or oncology staging in some cases [1-4](#)

About Preoperative Chest Radiography (CXR)

- History and examination have been shown to predict most clinically significant abnormalities that would be detected on CXR [7](#)
- Disadvantages of extensive routine preoperative testing include [8](#)
 - patient discomfort
 - unnecessary waiting times for some procedures
 - unnecessary direct costs and potential for unnecessary subsequent tests related to false-positive abnormal findings
- In asymptomatic patients, the yield of CXR is low [9](#) and abnormal findings rarely change management [7, 10-13](#)
- Even in older patients, most detected abnormalities reflect chronic disorders and do not impact on anaesthetic management or perioperative outcome [3](#)

- Routine CXR is a poor predictor of post-operative pulmonary complications [1, 3, 14](#)
- A randomized, single-blind, prospective, controlled pilot study showed that there was no increase in the perioperative adverse events as a result of no preoperative testing [15](#)

References

Date of literature search: March 2018

References are graded from Level I to V according to the Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Levels of Evidence. [Download the document](#)

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ambulatory surgery. Anesth Analg. 2009;108(2):467-75. (Level II evidence). [View the reference](#)

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