

Ultrasonography May Be As Good As CT For Initial Diagnosis Of Nephrolithiasis.

[Reuters](#) (9/18, Emery) reports that according to the results of a three-year [study](#) published Sept. 17 in the New England Journal of Medicine, ultrasonography may be as good as a CT scan for the initial diagnosis of nephrolithiasis and exposes patients to less radiation. Researchers arrived at this conclusion after having studied 2,759 adults who presented to 15 emergency departments with symptoms indicative of a kidney stone. Patients were randomized either to ultrasound or CT.

A [Modern Healthcare](#) (9/18, Rice, Subscription Publication) blog entry reports that an editorial accompanying the study “noted there are pros and cons for each test.” The editorial observed that “the decision to use ultrasound should be balanced against the additional information obtained by a CT...and no matter which method is chosen, it’s important to reinforce prevention strategies with patients.” The blog entry also noted that “research presented in May at the annual meeting of the American Urological Association found use of ultrasound instead of CT reduced cumulative radiation exposure for patients and also was less expensive.”

[Aunt Minnie](#) (9/18, Ridley) points out that the study revealed “no significant differences in the number of patients with serious adverse events (point-of-care ultrasound: 12.4%; radiology ultrasound: 10.8%; and CT: 11.2%).” What’s more, “there were similar low rates across groups for related serious adverse events (0.4%), according to the researchers.” Notably, “the groups did not differ significantly with regard to return emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and diagnostic accuracy.”