

Clinical Alert – CT Contrast Shortage UPDATE

AIM Radiology Program

AIM is aware of the possible temporary contrast shortage involving GE Healthcare’s iodinated contrast media (Omnipaque™). Iodinated contrast is used to provide enhancement of organs, tissues, and blood vessels for CT scans. GE estimates an ~ 80% reduction in the supply of Omnipaque for ~ 6–8 weeks.

How will the contrast shortage impact your radiology benefits management?

No impact. AIM management focuses on the appropriateness of the modality. We leave decisions about whether to perform that modality with or without contrast to the radiologist/rendering provider.

For requests to change approved contrast CT to noncontrast CT

AIM reviews imaging exams in groupers, regardless of contrast protocol. If an authorization for a contrast-CT exam was given, and the exam has not been performed yet, the existing authorization can be used for that same CT to be done without contrast. For example, an authorization for CPT 74160 (CT Abdomen W/ Contrast Material) can be used for CPT 74150 (CT Abdomen W/O Contrast Material).

For requests to change modalities from CT to MRI

For indications that cannot be adequately imaged by non-contrast CT, alternative advanced imaging modalities may be appropriate. Many AIM guideline indications already include allowances for MRI and/or PET/CT “when CT cannot be performed or is non-diagnostic,” which would include scenarios such as this when contrast CT cannot be performed (and non-contrast CT would be expected to be non-diagnostic). AIM will continue to review appropriateness of alternate imaging modalities in the context of the requested indication.

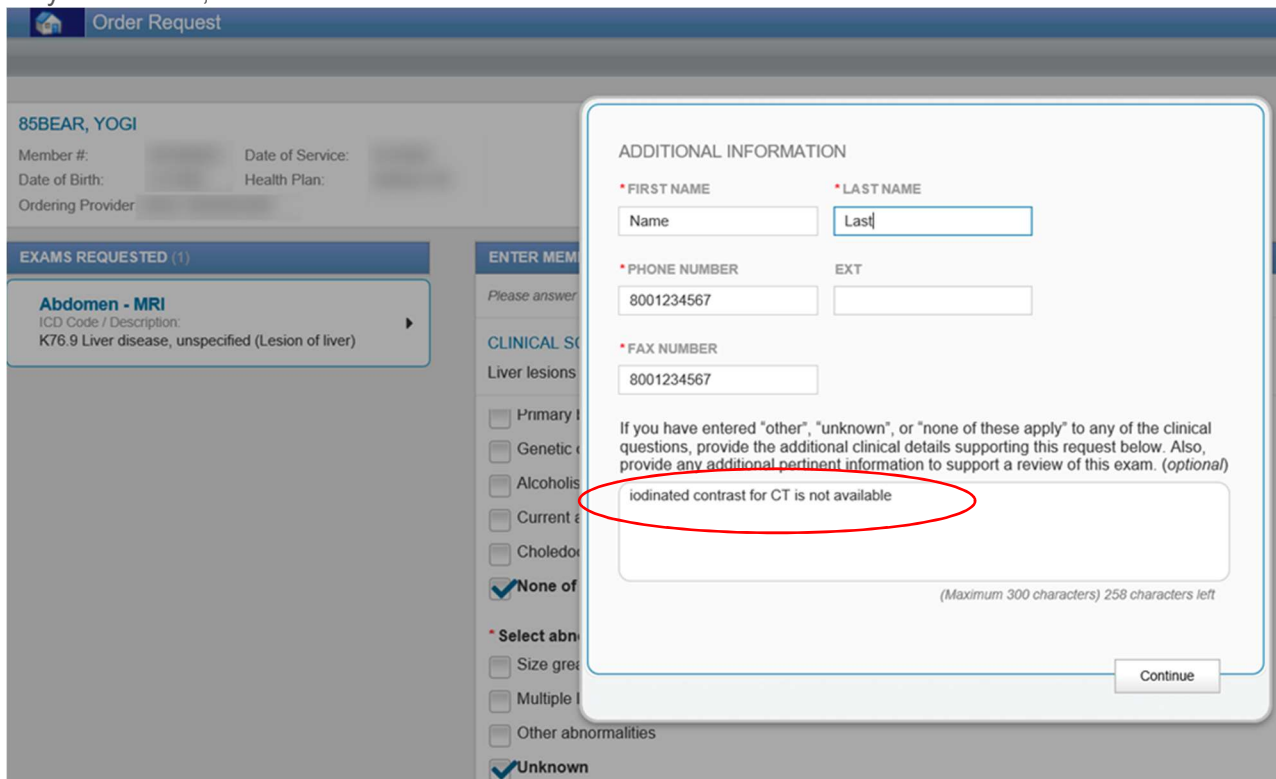
All requests for alternate modalities made under such circumstances should include this detail in the request, either by peer-to-peer discussion or via the free text entry option available for online **ProviderPortal**SM requests (see below), for our consideration.

For requests to extend authorization time frame

If deferring a CT exam to a later date (beyond original approval time frame), please cancel/withdraw the original authorized order first and then submit a new request. If the new exam does not approve with the system clinical questions, please include detail re: past authorization and need for time frame extension.

Entering requests via the AIM ProviderPortal:

Please answer the system clinical questions regarding the indication for imaging to the best of your ability. For cases that do not approve after answering these system questions, additional free text detail may be entered, as below:



The screenshot shows the 'Order Request' interface. At the top, it displays the patient name '85BEAR, YOGI' and fields for Member #, Date of Service, Date of Birth, Health Plan, and Ordering Provider. Below this, there is a section for 'EXAMS REQUESTED (1)' with a button for 'Abdomen - MRI' (ICD Code / Description: K76.9 Liver disease, unspecified (Lesion of liver)). To the right, there are 'CLINICAL' questions, including 'Liver lesions' with checkboxes for 'Primary', 'Genetic', 'Alcoholis', 'Current', 'Choledo', 'None of', and 'Unknown'. The 'None of' option is checked. An 'ADDITIONAL INFORMATION' pop-up window is overlaid on the form, containing fields for 'FIRST NAME' (Name), 'LAST NAME' (Last), 'PHONE NUMBER' (8001234567), and 'EXT'. Below these fields is a 'FAX NUMBER' field (8001234567) and a large text area for additional information. The text 'iodinated contrast for CT is not available' is entered in this text area and circled in red. A 'Continue' button is at the bottom right of the pop-up window.



Once this free text is entered and the request is submitted, the case will be transferred to our nurses/physicians for review. During this time, the case will appear as **“In progress.”** There is no need to routinely request your provider to do a peer-to-peer discussion for cases still “In progress” before our review, unless additional clinical information other than what was entered as free text needs to be discussed.

Once reviewed, a determination will be available on the anticipated determination date (shown below):

The screenshot shows the 'Order Request Preview' page. At the top, there is a blue header with the AIM SpecialtyHealth logo. Below the header, a yellow banner contains the text: "If the ordering provider would like to discuss this case with an AIM physician reviewer, contact AIM Specialty Health." Below the banner, there are navigation buttons: "in another Request", "Withdraw Request", "Go to My Homepage", "Save as PDF", and "Email". A blue bar below the buttons contains the text: "his case has at least one exam with AIM Feedback. You may come back later to View Order History and edit any exam(s) that remain open in a case. Select 'Email' to share a link to this case with another authorized user." Below this, there is a section titled "Order Request Summary" with a yellow background. It displays "Order ID: 15781" and "Anticipated Determination Date: 05/20/2022". A yellow box with a warning icon and the text "In Progress" is also present. Below the summary, there is a section for "Member Information", "Ordering Provider", and "Servicing Provider". At the bottom, there is a table titled "REQUESTED EXAMS" with columns for EXAM, REQUEST STATUS, REASON, and ACTION. The table contains one row: "Abdomen - MRI With Contrast".

This alert is being provided for informational purposes only and should not be relied upon for legal or regulatory guidance.