

Provider Memorandum

Imaging Contrast Medium Shortage and Response, With FAQs

Molina Healthcare of Illinois (Molina) is aware that a global shortage of iodinated intravenous contrast currently exists. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has reported shortages of two forms of contrast medium fluids known as [Iohexol](#) and [Iodixanol](#), both commonly used in CT scans. Per the FDA, supply has been impacted by a COVID-related shutdown in China; supply is expected to increase gradually through May and June, with a return to stocking levels in July 2022.

Response

Molina's approach to Prior Authorization (PA) of Advanced Imaging (AI) requests is to assess the medical necessity of the AI study requested. We do **not** review for the usage of contrast. Decisions to use contrast are the purview of the ordering provider and the imaging specialist. Molina will **not** issue a denial based on the usage (or lack of usage) of contrast.

Requests for Alternate Imaging

Providers who are unable to perform a contrast AI study due to the global shortage may decide that an alternate study is more appropriate. In this situation, providers can submit a request for the alternate AI study. They should provide the clinical information to support the alternate AI request. In addition, Molina **strongly encourages** providers to clearly indicate in the records if their preferred contrast study is not available due to the global shortage. This will allow a Molina Medical Director the opportunity to evaluate the medical necessity of the alternate imaging request while taking into consideration the current limitations being experienced.

Requests for Repeat Advanced Imaging

For AI studies that were initially performed without contrast due to the global shortage, a repeat AI study may be clinically indicated once contrast is available. In this situation, Molina **strongly encourages** providers to clearly indicate in the records that they are repeating the AI study for that reason. Without this information, the UM team may interpret these as inappropriate and medically unnecessary repeat studies.

FAQs

1. What is the best way to get a PA for an alternate AI study if contrast study is not available?

Submit the PA request for the alternate AI study per the current PA process. Clearly indicate in the notes the clinical rationale to support the alternate AI study—**and** indicate if your preferred contrast AI study is not available due to the global shortage. Authorizations are issued as long as the requested advanced imaging study meets established medical necessity criteria.

2. Can the authorization time frame be extended if an AI study must be delayed due to the global contrast shortage?

Authorizations are valid for 90 days. If the AI study must be delayed beyond the valid time frame, please submit another request. Clearly indicate in the notes that the previously authorized AI study was not performed, and was delayed and/or rescheduled outside of the valid time frame due to the global contrast shortage. To further facilitate the review, please include the previous authorization number in the notes.

3. Can the original authorization for an AI study that cannot be done due to the global contrast shortage be used for an alternate AI study?

No, you **must** submit a new request for the alternate AI study. Please refer to the answer in Question 1 above for further details.

4. If we received an authorization for an AI study and we planned to use contrast, but instead performed the service without contrast due to the global contrast shortage, will the original authorization be valid?

Authorizations are not specific to the usage of contrast. Molina reviews for the medical necessity of the AI study; we do **not** review for the usage of contrast. Decisions to use contrast are at the discretion of the ordering provider and the imaging specialist. If the provider determines at a later time that a repeat AI study is needed with contrast, the provider **must** submit a new PA request with the clinical information that clearly indicates why the AI study needs to be repeated.

Questions?

We're here to help. Contact your Provider Network Manager or email the Provider Network Management team at MHILProviderNetworkManagement@MolinaHealthcare.com. For help identifying your Provider Network Manager, visit [Molina's Service Area](#) page at MolinaHealthcare.com.

Availity Provider Portal

We continue our transition to the Molina Availity Provider Portal, a tool that streamlines your claims management, authorizations, and eligibility/benefit verification. Are you registered? [Click here](#).

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Note: Molina's website and documents are best viewed in Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge.