



How to Read Your Radiology Report

Your healthcare provider sometimes uses medical imaging to diagnose and treat diseases they think you may have. A radiologist is a physician who supervises these exams, interprets the images, and will write a report for your healthcare provider who ordered the exam. The report is then delivered to the ordering provider for review.

The radiologist creates this report using medical terms that your healthcare provider will understand. However, more complex medical terms may be confusing for you and/or your family members. The information below helps explain the typical parts of a radiology report.

Sections of the Radiology Report

- **Procedure/Type of Exam**

This section usually shows the date, time, and type of exam.

Example:

X-RAY Lower Extremity - Bilateral

- **Indication/Reason for Exam:**

This section usually lists the reason the exam was ordered and explains your symptoms and/or past medical history, as provided by your ordering doctor.

Example:

8-year-old female with a history of pain in lower extremities for the past 3 years.

- **Comparison/Prior Studies:**

This section is used to compare the new imaging exam with any available previous exams.

Example:

Comparison is made to an X-Ray exam performed of the lower extremities from ABC Urgent Care on 8.21.22.

- **Technique**

This section describes how the exam was done and whether contrast was injected in your vein.

Example:

Single AP view of the bilateral lower extremities was obtained.

- **Findings**

This section lists what the radiologist saw in each area of the body in the exam. Your radiologist notes whether they think the area to be normal, abnormal, or potentially abnormal. Sometimes an exam covers an area of the body but does not discuss any findings.

Example:

Examination standing lower extremity obtained. Pelvic tilt is present but normal. No acute fractures or dislocation identified. No osseous abnormality identified.

- **Impression**

In this section, the radiologist summarizes the findings and reports the most important findings they saw and possible causes for those findings. This section offers the most valuable information for decision-making.

Example:

No findings on the current X-Ray Exam to account for the patient's clinical complaint of pain.