



Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) vs. Low Enriched Uranium (LEU)

Why LEU?

The American Medical Isotope Production Act signed by President Obama was signed in 2013. It is part of a multi-nation effort to reduce the use of “weapons grade” HEU. The Act along with the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announcement for additional reimbursement for non-HEU diagnostic doses is a push for our industry to utilize LEU doses.

Uranium is used in the production of molybdenum (Mo-99) which is the parent isotope of technetium (Tc-99), used in millions of diagnostic procedures annually. The United States has no domestic facilities for Mo-99. The Safari reactor in South Africa and the Opal reactor in Australia are the only facilities that can supply LEU-derived raw product.

Fast Facts

- Full LEU conversion is expected by the year 2018
- CMS provides additional payments of \$10 per dose for doses made with LEU
- Limited availability – Lantheus is the only company producing the LEU generators for the nuclear pharmacies.
- Not a shortage of LEU; but a limited supply
- Our BioRx pharmacy computer system will track the LEU doses for you
- Radiopharmacy of Indianapolis (ROI) is currently supplying LEU doses to some customers
- Additional \$10 reimbursement is for Medicare patients only
- Applies to Medicare Hospital Outpatient doses only

As a Radiopharmacy of Indianapolis customer, you have access to our reimbursement specialist for all your reimbursement questions.

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Frequently Asked Questions - LEU

Q. Why is the industry moving toward non-LEU?

A. Most of the diagnostic doses used for medical imaging in the United States are made from High Enriched Uranium which is weapons grade. President Obama signed an Act that seeks to eliminate High Enriched Uranium materials by the year 2016.

Q. How are the LEU doses different from the HEU doses I use now?

A. There is no difference in procedures performed by the technologists. You will not need higher amounts of activity. The only difference is the raw material processed by the radiopharmacy.

Q. How do I get the additional \$10 for my LEU dose?

A. The additional payment applies to Medicare Hospital Outpatient doses only.

Q. What is the new code?

A. HCPCS code Q9969 (Tc-99m from non-highly enriched uranium source, full cost recovery add-on, per study dose). HCPCS code Q9969 is assigned to APC 1442 (Non-HEU Tc-99m Add-On/Dose) with a status indicator of "K" and a CY 2014 payment rate of \$10.

Q. How do I prove the doses are LEU to the CMS?

A. ROI will provide documentation on your dose label, packing slip, and radiopharmaceutical invoice stating the doses were prepared with at low enriched uranium generators.

Q. Is there a price difference on LEU doses?

A. Due to the limited availability of LEU generators and expenses associated with LEU doses there will be a slight price increase. The final cost depends on the quantity of doses ordered.

Q. When can I start?

A. Now! Radiopharmacy of Indianapolis is already supplying LEU doses to some of our customers!