

## RE: USE OF THALLIUM-TECHNETIUM PARATHYROID SCANS

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The article by Broughan et al<sup>1</sup> was informative and their findings were similar to mine. Yet I am curious regarding how they arrived at the \$152 estimated total cost for the study.

In my region of the country, the radionuclides (thallium-201 and pertechnetate Tc99m) cost between \$70 and \$120, depending on the monthly case loads. Based on these figures, that would leave little remaining to cover the remainder of the direct and indirect costs. Consequently, the total cost for a particular service should probably be omitted in published reports since it may vary from region to region.

Recently, in a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) "certificate-of-need" application, the users reported that they could perform MRI for less than \$400 per patient.

This was shown to be erroneous and was based on published reports like the one in your journal.

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### REFERENCE

1. Broughan TA, O'Donnell JK, Kropilak MD, Esselstyn CB Jr. Use of thallium-technetium parathyroid scans. *Cleve Clin J Med* 1987; 54:179-183.

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### REPLY

Revealing the cost of this study was important in making a point about the cost-effective approach to evaluating these patients. We do not think that anyone should fear the publication of this price if he or she can substantiate their own price based on their particular costs.

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