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NEWSLETTER

Age, Acuity, and Accuracy

An important part of a claim revolves around temporal factors and the date of loss. Did the claimant have a new injury or was the condition preexisting? Did the injury happen before or after the claimed date of loss? Did a new injury exacerbate an old condition? Or does the claimant simply have degenerative changes?

While those might sound like questions that have complicated answers, most of the time they aren't. In fact, the answer is almost as black and white as the images themselves. The main factor fellowship trained radiologists look for when aging an injury is the presence of edema. Edema is the medical term used to describe the swelling and fluid accumulation that takes place after an injury.

Acute pathology will present with edema in the injured area on imaging. Chronic injuries will not. Edema on MRI is described as an area of "high signal" and indicates that fluid accumulation has taken place recently. In contrast, chronic injuries and degenerative changes look darker on MRI which makes it easy to tell the two apart. While there are some exceptions to aging an injury, more than 80% of the time a fellowship trained, sub-specialized radiologist can opine on whether an injury is acute or chronic in nature.

Learn more about fellowship trained, sub-specialized radiologists [here](#) or visit [this link](#) to submit a case and leverage their expertise in aging injuries.

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