

Do telephone call interruptions have an impact on radiology resident diagnostic accuracy?

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<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/do-telephone-call-interruptions-have-impact-radiology-resident-diagnostic-accuracy>

[Interruptions](#) are inevitable for busy clinicians, and recently studies have shown that interruptions can [increase workload](#) for physicians and raise the risk of [medication administration errors](#) by nurses. However, these safety risks must be balanced against the fact that interruptions are often necessary for patient care. This study analyzed data from telephone logs and a formal quality assurance program to examine the effect of telephone interruptions on accuracy of on-call radiology residents' study interpretations. The authors found that a higher frequency of interruptions was associated with more [diagnostic errors](#). This study is one of the first to document clinical consequences of physician interruptions and adds to our understanding of [systems contributors](#) to diagnostic errors. An incident involving an incorrect overnight radiology interpretation is discussed in a past AHRQ WebM&M [commentary](#).