



Contrast Agents That Improve GI Tract Opacification During Abdominal and Pelvic CT Scans

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The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) is seeking commercial partners interested in developing improved contrast agents for use during CT imaging of the gastrointestinal tract.

Overview

Computed tomography (CT) uses special X-ray equipment to obtain image data from different angles of the body and generate a cross-sectional image of body tissues and organs. Because CT is a non-invasive procedure that provides detailed, cross-sectional images of all types of tissue, it is a preferred method for diagnosing diseases of the bowel and colon.

Water or a positive, liquid contrast agent is often administered to help the radiologist better visualize the stomach, small bowel, and colon; however, these agents may not adequately distend the distal small bowel or may take too long to opacify the terminal ileum and cecum in patients suspected of having appendicitis.

The Invention

UW-Madison researchers have developed improved contrast agents for use during visualization of the gastrointestinal tract during CT scans. The contrast agents include an iso-osmotic contrast agent that preferably comprises polyethylene glycol (PEG) and electrolytes that make the PEG iso-osmotic. A positive contrast agent, such as an iodine- or barium-based contrast agent, may be added to the PEG.

Applications

- CT imaging of the gastrointestinal tract

Key Benefits

- Rapidly moves through the GI tract, even in the absence of peristalsis
- Decreases the time required to prepare patients for CT scans
- Consistently and rapidly opacifies the terminal ileum and cecum in patients suspected of having appendicitis
- Requires smaller amounts than current contrast agents, reducing cost and improving patient satisfaction
- Provides low attenuation
- Adequately distends the entire small bowel
- Iso-osmotic contrast agent can be administered at the same time as a positive, intravenous contrast agent

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