The following are basic guidelines to help avoid simple errors.

Read the Request Form

Read the requisition form and any accompanying documents. Remember the patient's name and procedure requested. If you are not sure what is written on the form, call the referring physician.

Look at the Imaging

The patient should have a recent radiograph/imaging, most likely on the day of the procedure. Make sure you are looking at the imaging of the patient you are treating. Have the correct site and side on view. Plan an approach for the procedure before interviewing the patient.

Talking to the Patient

The following is a simple and effective technique to ensure good communication:

- Ensure that before walking into the exam room you know the patient's first and last name.
- Introduce yourself and your position/role, as well as others that may be involved.
- Ask the patient about his/her symptoms. Make sure the procedure is still indicated.
- Confirm the side and site of the procedure with the patient.
- Ask the patient about any allergies.

Explaining the Procedure

Tell the patient what you are going to do in simple terms (e.g. how they will be positioned, clean the skin, drape the skin, inject local anesthetic, insert needle, check needle position, and inject medication).

The following should be discussed:

- There is a very small risk of infection with any injection.
- Risk of allergic reaction to contrast material.
- There is a very small risk of bleeding.
- It may be a little uncomfortable when injecting the local anesthetic.
- The injection may not work.