

Closed reactor causes medicine shortage

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Delays in restarting a new nuclear reactor in Australia have forced the country to ration radiopharmaceuticals needed for medical tests.

The Lucas Heights nuclear reactor was shut down in July when uranium fuel plates came loose, forcing Australia to import radioactive ingredients from South Africa and Canada, the Sydney Morning Herald said Friday.

A doctor specializing in nuclear medicine said delays in getting radiopharmaceuticals could force the postponement of chemotherapy for cancer patients who first needed a heart scan to ensure they could cope with the treatment.

A committee of doctors and Lucas Heights specialists is prioritizing patients, a Lucas Heights official said.

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