

# MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) No Preparation



If you have claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces) or anxiety, we encourage you to ask your physician for a prescription for a mild sedative. MRI exams can last anywhere between 20 minutes and 1 hour and it is important to remain still for the entire test. If you have any concerns about being in a confined space for this long, please discuss sedation with your physician. If sedation is used, you must plan for a safe ride home.

To keep patients 'metal free' in the MRI scanning room, you will be asked to remove street clothes and wear a hospital gown for the MRI exam. You will also be asked to remove the following items prior to your scan:

- Jewelry, watches, credit cards and hearing aids, which can be damaged by the MRI's magnetic field.
- Pins, hairpins, and similar metallic items.
- Removable dental work.
- Pens, pocketknives and eyeglasses.
- Some body piercings.
- Patches for pain, nitro, nicotine, etc.

## How to prepare for a MRI?

If you answer yes to either of the following questions, please contact the MRI department at 684-6321. More information or additional testing may be required before you are able to have an MRI:

1. Do you have a pacemaker, cochlear implant or brain aneurysm clip(s)?
2. Have you ever worked with metal or have you ever had an accident that may have caused a sliver of metal to go in to your eye(s)?



## What is an MRI?

An MRI scanner is essentially a large magnet that has a very powerful magnetic field 15,000 times the force of gravity. Metal objects and electronic devices are therefore extremely unsafe in an MRI environment.

An MRI scan provides very clear pictures of structures inside the body.

## What will happen during the MRI?

When you register for your MRI on the date of your examination, you will be given an MRI screening form to complete. The screening questionnaire asks important safety questions. Prior to your exam, the technologist will review your responses to the screening questionnaire.

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and then be placed inside the magnet. The magnet is like a big long square donut with a hole in the middle and open at both ends. While you are in the magnet you will hear loud noises. The technologist will be sitting at the control booth in the next room and they can see you through the glass. They will talk to you throughout the test.

The test takes anywhere from 20 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes, depending on the type of scan you are having. It is important to lie very still during the test to get clear pictures.

Some MRI examinations require an injection of contrast medium into the bloodstream during the

test. Contrast allows the radiologist to better see certain structures in the body in order to make a diagnosis. Before the administration of contrast, patients are carefully screened to ensure that there are no risk factors present that may have the potential to cause an adverse reaction from the contrast media. It is important that patients disclose any serious health problems or if they have recently had surgery. Some conditions, such as severe kidney disease may prevent patients from being given contrast material for an MRI.

The contrast material used for an MRI exam, called gadolinium (Gad), is very safe. Adverse reactions are therefore rare; however, we must be thorough in our screening to keep patients safe.

## What will happen after the MRI?

After your scan you may return to your normal activities. The radiologist will send the MRI report to your physician. The results will be given to you by your physician.