

MRI Patient Information

What is MRI?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a method of looking inside the body. Instead of x-rays the MRI scanner uses a magnetic field and radio waves to produce remarkably clear images of your head, spine or other parts of your body.

How do I prepare for my MRI scan?

Generally no special preparation is required prior to your MRI scan, unless your doctor has given you other instructions. Only certain types of abdominal scans require a 6 hour fast prior to the scan.

All jewellery needs to be removed prior to MRI scans. Please wear loose fitting clothes without zippers or metallic parts.

Any relevant x-rays or scans should be brought to your examination.

Upon arrival to your appointment you will be given a Safety Questionnaire to complete, as the magnetic field and radio waves used during the scan can disrupt or damage certain implanted devices. If you do not speak English, an interpreter must accompany you.

Please note, if you have a Pacemaker you cannot have a MRI scan. If you have surgical clips or other metal, this will also be covered in your Safety Questionnaire, and appropriate measures taken.

What happens during my MRI scan?

Prior to entering the MRI examination room, you will be asked to remove all loose metal objects from your body. Some patients may have to completely change into a gown. A locker is provided in your cubicle to secure your valuable items.

After you have removed all metal objects, the MRI technologist will position you on a special table, and the table will then slide into the scanner. Our small length MRI scanner allows a large percentage of examinations to be performed with your upper body outside the magnet, allowing for greater comfort – with the exception of head and neck scans, of course.

For clear pictures you will be asked to hold still and relax. Any movement during the scan will seriously blur the images.

In some cases you may be given a small injection of MRI contrast agent to better demonstrate blood vessels or highlight specific body areas.

While the machine is taking your pictures, you will hear rapidly repeating thumping noises coming from the walls of the scanner. For additional comfort, earplugs are provided. You can request your favourite radio station or alternatively bring your favourite CD.

How long will it take?

MRI scans are generally completed within 15 to 25 minutes. The image processing and specialist reporting can take a number of hours to complete. The images, along with the Radiologist report are sent to your referring doctor within 24 hours.

Are there any risks to MRI?

One of the major advantages of MRI is that it does not use radiation, like x-rays and CT scans. The frequency of the radio waves used in MRI are similar to those used by FM radio stations.

It is critical that you complete the Safety Questionnaire correctly and inform the technologist of any implanted devices prior to your scan.

Fees

Please note that our Berwick scanner is a private scanner that is not covered by Medicare.

All WorkCover and TAC related examinations are billed directly to the insurance companies. Please have these details with you.

