

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a test that uses radio waves or magnetic fields to take pictures of your brain. No radiation is involved. It is safe and painless. This test takes multiple pictures of your brain allowing us to see any changes. Once the scan is completed, a radiologist and members of your treatment team will review the pictures and provide an interpretation of the findings. However, the findings are not always specific and many diseases have similar appearance. We will provide you with our best judgments when we discuss the results. The images are electronic and are available for review on a hospital computer soon after completing the scan. An official interpretation from the radiologist is available the following day.

The length of your MRI can vary, but most take between 30 to 90 minutes.



Notify your health care provider if you have had any of the following changes since your last MRI to avoid/minimize exam delays or cancellations:

- Any stents (bring procedure documents)
- Claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces)
- Metallic implanted devices (bring device documentation)
- Metal dental work (braces, magnetic dentures or metal retainer)
- Pacemakers or defibrillators (bring documentation)
- Dermal or body piercings (remove prior to appointment)
- Rods screws or plates
- Tissue expanders
- Metal tracheostomy

Important Instructions

Call or inform your clinic if you:

- Have an allergic reaction to MRI contrast (gadolinium, not iodine)
- Are pregnant
- Have cerebral aneurysm clips, spinal stimulators, or cochlear ear implants
- Have a continuous infusion pump
- Have an Inferior Vena Cava (IVC) filter (umbrella) or stents
- Have metal in your eyes (ex: if you were a metal worker)
- Weigh more than 350 pounds
- Cannot stand without assistance
- Choose to be sedated with medicine

To Prepare:

- Please bring any cards or reports you may have for any implant in your body.
- You will need to remove all metal items such as coins, watch, jewelry, and piercings from your body. Please leave valuable belongings at home.
- Leave your credit cards at home because the strong magnets in the room could change the card so it will not work.
- Medication patches need to be removed for the test. Please bring a new patch that you can put on after the test.
- Hydrate with water if you have poor veins or if you have an order that includes contrast.
- Please arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time. Bring your insurance card.
- You will fill out a form about your health history. At the time of scheduling, let the MRI department know if:
 - Are or could be pregnant
 - Are breastfeeding
 - Weigh over 300 pounds
 - Have a cardiac pacemaker
 - Have aneurysm clips
 - Have any type of implanted device such as a pump or stimulator
 - Have metal shrapnel or fragments inside your body
- If ordered with contrast, an IV may be started in your arm for IV medicine called contrast. IV contrast is needed to give better pictures on certain studies.
- Hydrate by drinking only water if you have poor veins. You will need labs drawn that includes Creatinine performed within 30 days of exam.

During the Test:

- You will lie on a padded table, in a large wide diameter scanner
- If being in a closed space frightens you, talk to your doctor. Your doctor may give you some medicine to bring with you to help you relax.
- It is very important that you lay very still until the test is complete. Any movement will diminish the quality and clarity of the images.
- You will hear a loud sound like a drum beat as the pictures are taken. Ear plugs will be inserted.
- You will be able to communicate with the staff during the test by squeezing the alert ball, but you will be in the room alone.

After the test:

- If you were given contrast, drink 6 to 8 (8-ounce) cups of liquid to flush the contrast from your body.
- You may drive home if you were not given medicine to help you relax.

