

Mri Scan

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a specialised imaging modality that obtains multiple cross-sectional images of the organs and tissues of the body. MRI is similar to CT but is able to image the body in all dimensions and is often complimentary to CT examinations.

The advantage of MRI is its ability to demonstrate the differences between soft tissues without using radiation (X rays). A computer processes the images to create cross-sectional pictures or “slices” of the area of interest.

The MRI scanner is a large unit with a hole running directly through its centre, giving the appearance of a doughnut. It is however longer than a CT scanner.

You will lie on a table that can move up or down and can slide into and out of the centre of the cavity. The computer is not in the examining room, but in an adjoining control room.

What Is It?

- Very detailed images of the primary area of interest (better than CT)
- There is no radiation involved.
- The procedure is non-invasive
- MRI scanning is a pain-free procedure

Procedure Advantages

The radiographer will ask you important questions before you are allowed to enter the scanner room. The MRI uses a very strong magnet and the radiographer needs to establish that it is safe for you to enter the room.

You will be asked to remove some of your clothes and wear a hospital gown.

You will be correctly positioned on the MRI table. Short initial scans will be obtained to plan the more detailed imaging.

The scans are very noisy; you will be given ear plugs and can listen to music via headphones if you like.

You will be asked to remain as still as possible and on occasion asked to hold your breath.

A small cannula may be inserted into an arm vein and contrast injected into the vein.

MRI scanning is a pain-free procedure. You will however be placed into the machine which can feel a little claustrophobic.

The radiographer will give you eye patches if you wish and reassure you during the procedure.

The examination usually takes 45-60 minutes, including preparation time.

Possible Risks

MRI can be a little claustrophobic

MRI is very noisy

You must tell the radiographer if you have any allergies to medications or whether you have a history of asthma, diabetes, heart disorder or kidney disease. These conditions may indicate a greater risk of an adverse reaction to contrast material.