

## Magnetic Resonance Imaging Test

*If you have any questions about this test, please ask your physician or nurse.*

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a test that uses magnets, radio waves and a computer to make pictures of the inside of your body. It does not use X-rays. During the test, a contrast agent (dye) may be given. This makes certain parts of your body appear brighter on the pictures.

The time it takes for the test depends upon the area to be scanned and the information needed by your physicians. Most MRI tests last about 45 to 60 minutes. A physician's order is needed for all MRI scans. To schedule an appointment at one of our several locations, please call 312.926.9000, TTY 312.926.6363.

### Before the test

Please tell your physician if you might be pregnant, are trying to become pregnant or are breastfeeding.

Also, please tell your physician if you have kidney disease or are being treated with dialysis. If you are being treated with dialysis, you will need to schedule dialysis on the day of your MRI test and the following day. This will help rid your body of any contrast dye used during the test.

Every patient who has an MRI test will be screened to ensure that certain safeguards are in place. Please tell your physician or an MRI staff member before the test if you have any metal inside your body. This may include:

- Pacemaker
- Aneurysm clip
- Ear or eye implant
- Joint or bone rods, clips or implants
- Metal plate
- Bullets or shrapnel
- Neurostimulator
- Programmable shunt
- Hair extensions with metal clips

Please talk with your physician if you cannot lie flat for about an hour or if you are uncomfortable with closed-in spaces.

The scheduling MRI staff will let you know before the test about any special instructions you need to prepare for this test before the test. Usually, there is no special preparation.

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 30 minutes before your test time. Also, be sure to bring:

- Your physician's written order for the test if you received one
- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbal)

- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

If plans were made to give you any medication to help you relax, you also will need a responsible adult to take you home.

Upon arrival, you will be asked to complete an MRI safety questionnaire and a medical history form.

Before the test, you will be taken to a locker room to change into a hospital gown and store your belongings. It is important that you remove all metal objects and belongings, including jewelry, body piercings, hairpins, hearing aids, dentures, credit cards and keys. The staff nurse will review your completed forms with you. An intravenous (IV) line may be started in a vein in your arm or hand.

## During the test

You will be taken to the MRI testing room. The technologist (tech) who will be doing the test can answer any questions you may have.

You will be asked to lie on a table attached to the MRI machine. The tech will help position you comfortably on the imaging table. You will be given a hand-held device to help you contact the tech during the test as needed. The MRI machine will make a loud drumming noise during testing. You will be given earplugs to protect your hearing. If medication was ordered to help you relax, a nurse will inject it into the IV line at this time. You may be given an IV contrast dye during the test. As the dye is injected, you may feel warm or flushed, or you might notice a metallic taste in your mouth. This is normal. However, please notify the staff right away if you have shortness of breath, hives or itching.

Your body and the machine are lined up so the proper area of your body can be examined. Then, the table will move so you are in the center of the machine. The tech will keep in contact with you throughout the test. It is very important that you lie still and follow instructions. Between scans, the drumming noise will stop. You may be asked to hold your breath several times during the test.

When the test is over, you will be helped off the imaging table.

## After the test

If you received medication to help you relax, you must remain in the department for about an hour. Your blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen level will be monitored by a nurse. Unless told otherwise, you may resume your normal activities and diet after the test. It is helpful to drink extra fluids if you received contrast dye. The contrast dye will not discolor your urine.

Most often, initial MRI findings are sent to your physician within 48 hours. A full report follows in about 5 business days.