

# What is an MRI?

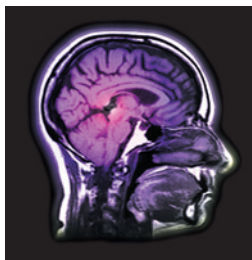
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a safe and painless way of imaging the internal structures and functions of the body. It provides detailed images of the body in any plane. MRI has much greater soft tissue contrast than Computed Tomography (CT) making it especially useful in neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular and oncological diseases. Unlike CT, it uses no ionizing radiation.

## How does an MRI work?

The MRI machine generates radio waves that record signals from the body's atoms; the machine then transforms these signals into images. This is accomplished by placing your body into a cylinder that is the center of a large magnet.

## What should I expect?

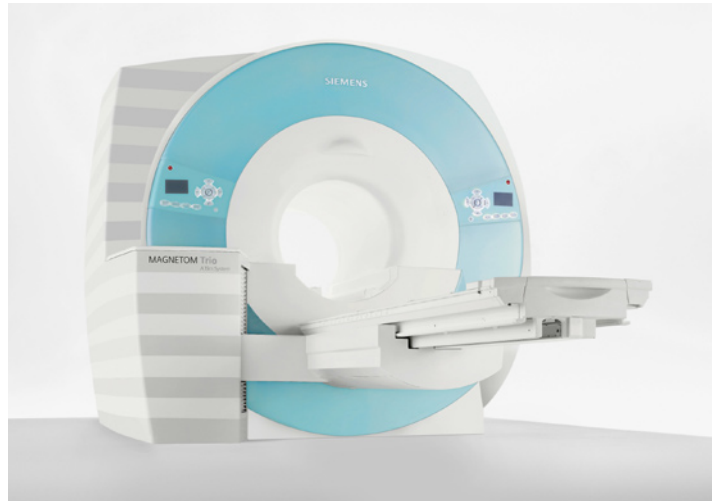
MRI exams take between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on which part of the body your doctor wants to examine. During your scan, you will hear a rhythmic tapping sound; this is the normal sound of the magnetic fields as it scans. You may receive an IV (intravenous) injection of a contrast agent to enhance a particular body structure. MRI is considered safe at the levels of magnetic field strength used.



## What precautions should I take?

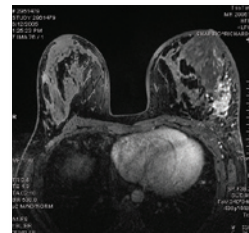
It is very important for us to know if you have any metal in your body before your MRI scan is performed. The MRI uses a very strong magnet that may create movement of certain metal objects in your body. This can be very dangerous and even life-threatening, and may also interfere with the scan. Please let your physician and the MRI staff know if you:

- Have a pacemaker or Automatic Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (AICD)
- Have had a mitral or aortic valve replacement
- Have any implanted mechanical or electrical device (i.e. Cochlear or Stapes ear implant, magnetic dentures, spinal stimulator, etc.)
- Have brain aneurysm clips
- Have a history of shrapnel or metallic fragments in your eyes
- Have a history of claustrophobia
- Are pregnant or think you could be pregnant



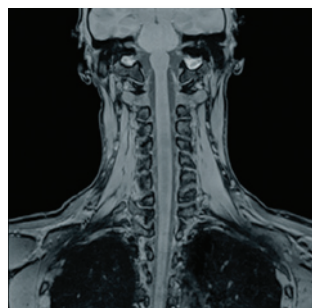
## What do I need to do to prepare for an MRI?

Generally, no preparation is necessary for an MRI scan. If your physician gives you a script or films, please bring them to your appointment. Unless otherwise instructed, you may eat or drink before the exam and continue your normal activities afterward. If your exam is scheduled with sedation, please check with your physician or the MRI department for further instructions.



## What else is important to know?

You should not take any metal objects into the examination room, including watches, partial plates, dentures, hearing aids, credit cards, pocket knives, lighters, calculators, hair pins, etc. Items such as wigs and eye makeup may also interfere with brain scans. If you wear a wig or hairpiece, inform the technologist before the exam begins. Also, please do not wear eye makeup if you are scheduled for a brain scan.



## How will I find out the results?

Your MRI is supervised and interpreted by a sub-specialized radiologist, a physician specially trained in reading MRI scans and in other diagnostic modalities.

The radiologist will interpret the findings of your MRI and prepare a report for your referring physician. You should receive the results from the physician who sent you for your diagnostic study.

