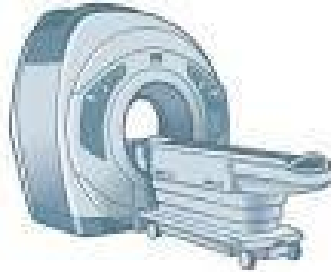


## DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY

# Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)



### What is an MRI scan

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) creates high resolution images of the body on a computer using a powerful magnet and radio frequency waves. MRI is a very safe way of producing images that can diagnose medical conditions. Unlike CT (Computed Tomography) it does not use X-rays and has not been shown to have any harmful side effects.

### What does it involve

The MRI scanner is a long open ended tube, surrounded by a large magnet present in the circular area. You will be asked to lie on a scanning table, which will be moved slowly so the part of your body being scanned is in the centre of the scanner. It is important that you remain as still as possible, so the best images can be achieved. You will be positioned either head first or feet first depending on the area to be scanned. Ear protection will be provided because the scanner makes a loud drumming noise. During the scan, the radiographer will be able to see you from the control room, and hear you via a two-way intercom.

Sometimes an injection will be required to give clearer pictures of certain tissues or organs being examined, but this will be discussed with you if it is necessary.

### Will I feel anything

MRI is entirely painless. You should not feel any discomfort during the scan and experience no after effects.

### How long will the scan take

The length of the scan depends upon the part of the body being imaged and the information your referrer needs. The scanning time can range from ten minutes being the shortest scan time to two hours in length. Staff try to keep to appointment times, however there can sometimes be unexpected delays.

## Prior to your appointment

You will be sent an MRI Safety Questionnaire to complete with your appointment letter. It is important to follow the instructions enclosed as failure to do so could result in delay or cancellation of your examination. You must remove all jewellery and body piercings before your appointment. Staff are not permitted to remove piercings. The MRI Safety Questionnaire will be checked by the Radiographer before your scan to ensure you are safe to have the procedure.

Most MRI scans need no special preparation. Instructions will be detailed in your appointment letter if necessary. Continue taking your normal medication.

Due to the strong magnetic field, metal items **cannot** be taken into the scan room. Storage is provided for valuables, but it is advisable to leave them at home. You will not be permitted to take them into the scan room with you.

## What happens when I arrive

You may be asked to change into a hospital gown, and a staff member will escort you to the scanning area.

## Can pregnant women have MR scans

There have been no reported effects from MRI to the unborn child. Scanning in the first trimester is not advised as a precaution. In certain critical cases, it may be necessary to be scanned during pregnancy when a more invasive diagnostic test would otherwise have to be performed. Your referrer will discuss this with you.

## Results of the scan:

The Radiographers are qualified MRI professionals who specialise in obtaining high quality images, but are not trained to diagnose problems from the scans. A Radiologist is a doctor medically trained to read scans. They will examine the images after your test and complete a report of your scan.

The results of your MRI scan will then be sent to the referring clinician who will arrange a follow up appointment.

**If you have any questions regarding the scan please contact the MRI appointments office:**

**Telephone:** 01603 286107 (Norfolk & Norwich) Mon-Fri 9am-5pm  
01603 646163 (Cromer) Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

**E-mail:** [nnu-tr.mri@nhs.net](mailto:nnu-tr.mri@nhs.net)

**Website:** [www.nnuh.nhs.uk](http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk)