

# Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)



## Radiology Department

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### What is an MRI Scan?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a diagnostic technique that uses a magnet, radio waves, and a computer to make an image of the structures of the body. It uses no radiation and has no known harmful effects.

### How to prepare:

Your child must lie still during the study. Anaesthesia is usually needed for any child under the age of seven or children who would have difficulty staying still for 45 minutes. If anaesthesia is needed, a radiology nurse will telephone you with the fasting instructions one-week prior the appointment.

### Will I get a needle?

Sometimes an injection of contrast (dye) is given to provide extra detail in the pictures. You will be asked to arrive one hour before the appointment time so an anaesthetic cream can be applied - usually the hand - to numb the area. Your child should not eat or drink for 2 hours before his/her appointment time.

### What will happen?

The MRI scanner is like a big tube with a tunnel through the middle. Your child is placed on the bed, usually on his/her back. The part to be examined is moved to the middle of the tunnel. Your child must not move during the scan so foam sponges and straps are used to help keep your child still. The machine makes loud knocking noises during the scan. Your child will wear earplugs or headphones to protect his/her ears. On most scans, it is possible to watch a movie or listen to music so bring a favorite DVD or CD. You may accompany your child in the room during the scan, if sedation is not required.

The technologist can see and talk to your child at all times and can stop the scan if necessary. **Please phone the Radiology Department at 604-875-2329 if:**

- your child is older than 7 years but you think he/she will not be able to lie quietly for at least 45 minutes during the scan
- your child has special needs or medical conditions, e.g. has diabetes
- your child has a fever, signs of a cold or chest infection (the appointment may need to be postponed as coughing causes involuntary movement).

### Special Precautions?

All people entering the MRI room are required to complete a questionnaire regarding their medical history. This questionnaire will help the MRI department ensure the safety of you and your child while in the MR scanning room.

### How long does it take?

Please check in at the Admitting Department in the main lobby of the hospital 30 minutes before the examination time. The MRI Scan can take between 30-75 minutes. If your child is having an anesthetic you will be at the hospital 2-3 hours.

### How does one get the results?

Once the images are reviewed a report will be sent to the doctor who requested the test within 5 days.

### Outpatients

The hospital is a busy place. Although there is pay parking on site, it can be hard to find a space. You must register at the Admitting Department before coming to the Radiology Department for the scan. Please make sure you allow time for these possible delays so you can be on time for the appointment.