

MRI - spine

What is a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)?

A MRI scan is a method of acquiring medical images using a strong magnetic field and radio waves. Cross sectional images are obtained that are particularly useful for looking at soft tissues.

Occasionally an injection of contrast dye called Gadolinium is required to obtain more information. If contrast is required for your test you will be asked to complete a questionnaire to assess your suitability. The contrast will only be given once your consent has been obtained and information will be provided detailing the benefits and risks.

What preparation is required?

Generally no patient preparation is required. If you think you may be claustrophobic please speak with our receptionists.

Not all patients can have an MRI scan. MRI uses a very powerful magnet, so for some patients with medical implants, electronic devices or metallic foreign bodies it is **not safe to have a MRI scan**. You will be sent a form to fill out prior to your MRI appointment to ensure that it is safe for you to go into the MRI scanner. If you have questions about an implant or device inside your body please call the number below.

What is involved?

When you arrive in the MRI department a receptionist will greet you and check your paperwork. A MRI radiographer will then escort you into the MRI department. The MRI radiographer will check your MRI safety questionnaire; they may ask additional questions to ensure that it is safe to undertake your examination. You will be then be taken to a change room and asked to change into a gown.

You will need to lie on your back inside the scanner, which is an open-ended tube. You will not notice anything except a loud banging noise while the scan is in progress. You will be given earplugs and/or headphones to protect your ears. It is very important that you keep perfectly still while you hear the loud noise. You will be given an alarm buzzer to alert the radiographer if you wish to stop or come out. The radiographer will communicate with you throughout the scan to ensure that everything is progressing well.

If required, the contrast is injected through a small cannula (plastic tube) inserted into a vein in your arm. This cannula remains in position for 10 minutes after your test has been completed.

Are there any side effects?

No, but if you have any concerns, please contact the department and speak with one of our staff.

How long will this take?

Most appointments take about 30 minutes.

How do I get my results?

Digital images are immediately available to your doctor and your records will be kept permanently. This occurs through a system called PACS. **If a priority report is requested it will be issued within two hours and faxed or emailed to your doctor, however this can sometimes take up to 24 hours.**

If your referring doctor wants to see you on the day of your examination, please advise the reception staff when you arrive for your appointment, so the appropriate information can be made available for you to take to your doctor.

How much will this cost?

Please ask reception staff of the cost involved at the time of booking your appointment.

Important

It is important to let us know when you make your booking if you are or think you may be pregnant or are breastfeeding.

It is important to bring with you your referral, previous x-rays and any other tests (only if previous ones were **not** done at Cabrini or I-MED).

Questions

For more information or to make an appointment, please contact Cabrini Medical Imaging using the relevant number below.