

Do I need to arrive early for my appointment?

Yes, arrive at the diagnostic Imaging department **15 minutes prior** to your appointment.

When you arrive you will need to complete a safety form and answer questions pertaining to your medical history.

This screening form and your medical history will be reviewed and the MRI Technologists will explain the MRI process to you.

Preparing for the Exam

You or your physician should arrange to send related previous films to the QEH prior to the day of your exam. Unless specified by your physician, there is no special diet or preparation necessary.

How long will the exam take?

That will depend on what is being studied, but a typical exam lasts between 30 and 60 minutes. You should always allow extra time in case the exam lasts longer.

What should I wear?

You will be required to change into a hospital gown prior to the exam.

You will need to remove all metal from your body before the exam. This includes your watch, jewelry, Coins, keys, bobby pins, credit cards, glasses, teeth, hearing aides, pocket knives, and all other metallic objects.

A locker will be provided for your clothing, jewelry and personal items.

It is strongly suggested that you leave your valuables safely secured at home.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

A Guide to your MRI exam

Patient Information

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What is MRI?

Magnetic resonance Imaging (MRI) is a method of imaging to allow doctors to see images of your internal organs and structures in great detail from many angles.

Instead of x-rays, the MRI scanner uses magnetism and radio waves to produce remarkably clear pictures of your head, spine or other parts of your body.

What happens during an MRI scan?

During an MRI scan you simply lie very still on your back on the MRI table while the pictures are being taken. Moving during the procedure may require repeating parts of the exam so it is best to try to remain as still as possible for the best exam results.

The MRI table that you lie on is narrow and your body goes through a well lit and ventilated tunnel of the scanner. Depending on the body part being imaged determines how much of your body is in the tunnel. There are very few patients who cannot be comfortably accommodated for an MRI exam.

When the machine starts to work, you'll hear some loud knocking sounds. These sounds occur whenever the MRI pictures are being taken. Think of them as the clicks a VERY large camera would make when taking pictures! We will provide headphones with music to help block out the knocking sounds. If you like, you can listen to a favorite CD or radio station.

Even with the headphones on you will still hear the technologist if he or she speaks to you during the exam and you can talk to the MRI technologist performing the scan.

Occasionally, an injection of a dye substance is given into a vein to provide extra detail to the pictures. MRI contrast agents typically have few or no side effects.

Will it hurt ?

No. Since MRI is "non-invasive", the exam is painless.

However, the doctor may utilize a contrast agent to better visualize a part of your anatomy. If this is the case, you may receive a simple needle with which you may be injected with a solution called a *contrast agent*.

Is MRI safe ?

The magnetic field and radio waves are safe and no adverse health effects have been reported with normal use.

However, people with certain metal devices in their body cannot be safely scanned with MRI (see below).

Things that will prevent me from being scanned?

Some patients with metal implants cannot be safely scanned in the MR environment. People with pacemakers, aneurysm clips, especially in the brain; and neuro-simulators generally cannot be scanned.

You will be required to provide a health history when you arrive for your exam explaining any metallic implants you may have.

Will I be claustrophobic?

Most people have no problems. However, if you have had claustrophobic reactions to enclosed spaces before, you should let your ordering Doctor know. Even if you are uncomfortable in small spaces, staff members can help you complete the study.

Will I be alone?

You will be in contact with a technologist at all times. The technologist is always able to see you through a large patient-viewing window.

Why may I need X-rays of my eyes?

If you have worked as a welder or a grinder or have ever had metal in your eyes, you will be required to have a pre-MRI x-ray to determine if you have metal within your eyes.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant or could be pregnant at the time of your scan appointment, please call us early so we can discuss the situation with you and consult your doctor.

When will I receive the result?

MRI scans have many more pictures with much greater detail than other X-ray or CT scans; thus, they take a lot longer to review and report.

Reports are typed and sent to the requesting doctor, either by mail or fax.

Please note that the MRI technologist cannot tell you the results of the scan and secretarial staff cannot give results over the telephone. The results are available from the Doctor who ordered the MRI exam.