



MRI Scan

Patient Information

MRI Department – Cobalt Imaging Centre

www.cobalthealth.co.uk

Registered Charity No: 1090790

 **Cobalt**
Diagnostic Imaging for Life



This leaflet aims to answer questions about having an MRI scan

What is an MRI scan?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) produces very detailed pictures of any part of the body in any direction. The scanner uses a high-strength magnet, radio waves and computers to generate images. MRI is a very safe way of producing images that can be used to diagnose medical conditions.

Why should I have an MRI scan?

Your referrer (usually a doctor,

physiotherapist or other medical professional) has decided an MRI scan is the best option for you to diagnose or assess your condition.

How do I prepare for the scan?

On the day of your scan you will usually be able to eat and drink as normal and take any medicine you have been prescribed - if there are any special requirements, we will discuss this with you when you book your appointment.

What happens when I arrive for my scan?

One of our specialist team will meet you and help you to prepare for your scan. We will complete a safety checklist with you and will be happy to answer any questions that you may have. You will be asked to sign a consent form before your scan.

You will need to remove all metal objects such as clothing with zips, jewellery, hair grips and piercings before entering the scan room because of the powerful magnet that is used to scan. Credit cards are also affected by the magnet. A locker will be provided for these and other valuables.

As makeup can contain fine metallic particles which affect the pictures, please do not wear eye makeup if you are having a scan of your head or eyes. You will also need to remove any drug administration patches for the duration of the scan because they may contain metal or affect the dose delivered during the scan.

What should I wear?

We will provide you with special loose fitting clothing to wear if you are wearing clothes that contain metal. You may prefer to arrive in clothes which do not contain metal for example clothing without any zips, buttons or metallic thread.

What happens during the MRI scan?

A radiographer will position you on a comfortable couch, which slides into the scanner. You will be asked to keep still while we scan you and produce your images. The scanner is very noisy when it is taking pictures so we will provide you with ear protection. We will be able to play music through headphones so you may like to bring a CD with you to listen to.

How long will it take?

This depends on which part of the body is being scanned. Most simple scans are completed in 20-30 minutes. Although we try to keep to appointment times, we don't always know

beforehand exactly how long a particular scan will take. This means that occasionally an appointment time may be slightly delayed.

Is it safe?

There is no radiation used for your MRI scan, so it is considered to be very safe. However, because the scanner uses a strong magnet it is important that you tell us if you have implants inside your body which may be metal or contain metal or if you have had any operations in the past. **Please see the 'Important' section on the right about implants that may affect your suitability to be scanned.**

Important

Because of the strong magnetic field some people are not suitable for scanning by MRI.

Please contact us before coming for your appointment if you have any doubts about whether you are suitable for MRI or if you have, or have had, any of the following.

- An electronic device such as a neurostimulator anywhere in your head or body
- A pacemaker or implantable cardiac defibrillator
- An artificial heart valve
- A cochlear implant
- Arterial clips, particularly, 'aneurysm' clips (these are metal clips that are inserted during some operations, especially in the blood vessels or the brain)
- Metal fragments in the eye, head or body (if you suspect that a metal fragment may have entered your eye, particularly if you have ever worked with a lathe or metal grinding equipment please contact us for advice)
- Any surgery in the six months before your appointment date
- Any surgery which involved placing implants in your head or body



Will I need an injection?

Occasionally we will need to give you an injection of contrast (a dye which makes blood vessels and organs show up more clearly) to give better images. This is normally given into the arm or the back of the hand by a qualified member of staff. You will be asked to sign a consent form after a full explanation.

What if I'm pregnant?

There are currently no known dangers from MRI, although we do not scan during pregnancy unless essential and would need written permission from your referrer.

For your comfort

We can make arrangements for your individual needs and comfort, for example we can sometimes allow an adult family member or friend into the MRI area with you, or we may be able to find more comfortable positions for you while you are being scanned.

What happens after my appointment?

There are no after-effects from your scan so you can usually carry on with all of your normal activities straight away.

Results

Your referrer should receive your scan report within a week. We advise that you should make an appointment with your referrer to discuss the results. The radiographer will not be able to give you your results on the day of your scan as the images need to be studied and a report written by a specialist doctor.

Lastly - relax

We are here to help. If you have any fears or doubts, don't hesitate to talk to one of our staff. If you would like to visit the department before your scan to have a look around, please contact us. More information can also be found on the patient pages of our website at www.cobalthhealth.co.uk

About Us

We believe everyone should have access to the best medical imaging for their diagnosis. We are a charity that invests in equipment, research and education to help this happen.

Our imaging service has been scanning patients since 1993. We were the first imaging service in the UK to meet the Imaging Service Accreditation Scheme (ISAS) quality standards and we have achieved the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Standard, these show that we have the ability to provide a high quality, safe service that is focused around patients.

We use state-of-the-art equipment including:

- The UK's first high field open MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scanner
- The only 3.0 Tesla mobile MRI service in Europe
- The latest PET/CT (Positron Emission Tomography/Computed Tomography) scanner
- The world's first Cone Beam CT 3D Extremity Scanner
- Digital X-ray
- Ultrasound



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