



MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI)

FACT SHEET

The Niagara Health System is pleased to provide you with general information about your upcoming exam.

WHAT IS MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI)?

MRI is a way of obtaining very detailed images of organs and tissues throughout the body without the need for x-rays. MRI uses a powerful magnetic field to take pictures of the body. MRI is widely used for imaging soft tissues including the brain, nerves and muscles.

WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE MY EXAM?

We recommend that you wear comfortable clothing without any metal snaps or zippers. Gowns will be available to you if necessary. You will be asked to remove all loose metal objects from your body. For your convenience, we offer storage lockers in which you may keep your valuables during your examination.

Certain medical conditions may prevent you from having an MRI. An exam may not be performed for a variety of reasons including:

- If you have a pacemaker
- If you have aneurysm clips
- If you have metal fragments in your eyes
- If you have any other implanted metal devices not safe for MRI
- If you think you are pregnant

The technologist will ask you a series of questions so that the exam can be performed safely and properly.

Depending on the exam, your symptoms, or prior medical history, you may be given an injected contrast agent during your MRI scan called 'gadolinium'.

If a contrast MRI is ordered, all patients with renal disease will require special screening to determine if the gadolinium contrast agent can be administered. If not, the exam may be modified.

WHAT IF I COULD BE PREGNANT?

Please tell the Medical Radiation Technologist if it is possible that you are pregnant. The test may have to be delayed.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO MY APPOINTMENT?

Please bring your Ontario Health Card.

Please note that the Niagara Health System is a scent-free environment.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING MY MRI APPOINTMENT?

The technologist will assist you on to the examination table. The table will then move slowly into the MRI unit, which is an air conditioned tunnel-like space that is open at both ends. The technologist will have you in full view, and will be in contact with you via a two-way microphone system.

Throughout the exam, you will hear some loud noises, ranging from buzzing to some knocking. Ear protection will be provided for you in order to minimize the noise level.

It is important that you refrain from moving during the exam as this will produce blurred images.

Typically, an MRI will vary in length between 20 and 60 minutes, depending on what type of information your doctor requires.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY MRI EXAM?

You may leave immediately following the procedure.

WHO REPORTS MY PICTURES?

The pictures are reported by specially trained doctors. The results are sent to your doctor.



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