

**Patient  
Information**

# Adults having an MRI scan

## Introduction

An MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scan has been booked for you. This leaflet gives you information about the MRI, the risks and what will happen during the scan.

## What is an MRI?

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) is a procedure which builds up pictures of the part of the body under investigation. This happens by using a magnetic field and radio waves, together with an advanced computer system. A series of images are built up, each one showing a thin slice of the area being examined. These images are very detailed and show both bones and soft tissues in the body giving us a great deal of information. Using the computer, the 'slices' can be looked at from any angle.

## Are there any risks?

As far as we know, this is a very safe procedure. It does not involve the use of X-rays, but even so, MRI scans are not suitable for everyone. Radiographers have to be certain that you meet the safety standards before entering the MRI scan room. You will be sent a safety questionnaire to complete with your appointment letter. Please fill this in and send it in to the address given on your appointment letter as soon as possible. There are no known risks of having an MRI scan if you meet the safety standards.

For female patients, if you are or might be pregnant, you must make sure the doctor referring you or a member of staff in the Radiology Department knows as soon as possible before you have your MRI. MRI scans may not be advisable in early pregnancy, unless there are special circumstances. If you are breast feeding, please telephone the number on your appointment letter.

Reference No.

**GHPI0318\_01\_20**

Department

**Radiology**

Review due

**January 2023**

**Patient  
Information****Do I need to make any special preparations?**

Usually you do not need to make any special preparations for an MRI scan. You may eat and drink normally before and after the scan unless you are advised not to.

**Can I bring a relative/friend?**

Yes, but for reasons of safety, they will be asked to stay in the waiting room. Only in special circumstances, will they be allowed to go with you into the scanning room.

**What happens when I arrive?**

A member of staff will explain about the particular scan you are having. You will be shown to a private cubicle where you may be asked to take off your outer garments and remove any jewellery (except your wedding ring). You will also be asked to remove any cash, keys, credit cards and watches from your pockets. You may be asked to put on a hospital gown but if you prefer, you can bring your own dressing gown. You should place your clothes and personal belongings in the locker provided.

**Who will I see?**

You will be cared for by a small team including a radiology assistant and a radiographer who will carry out the MRI scan.

**What happens during the MRI?**

You will be taken into the MRI scanning room and made comfortable on the couch. You may be given a solution (contrast medium) which helps to produce a more detailed image. The contrast medium would be injected into a vein in your arm.

**Will the scan be uncomfortable?**

During the scan, the machine will make a noise and vibrate slightly. We will provide you with ear protection.

## Patient Information

Most patients do not mind lying still inside the scanner which is open at both ends. If this worries you, you should talk to the Imaging/Radiology Department as soon as possible before your appointment.

### **How long will the scan take?**

The process of taking the images usually takes about 20 to 30 minutes and unless you are delayed, for example, by emergency patients, your total time in the department is likely to be about 60 minutes.

### **Are there side effects?**

There are no side effects. You can drive home afterwards, and resume your normal activities.

### **Can I eat and drink afterwards?**

Yes, do so as normal.

### **When will I get the results?**

After the scan, the images will be studied by the radiologist, who will then write a report and send it to your referring doctor. The process normally takes up to 4 weeks.

### **What shall I do if I have a query?**

If you have a query about having the MRI scan, please contact the MRI appointments officer on the number shown on your appointment letter. Calls should be made between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

**Patient  
Information**

## **Further information**

We are pleased that we can offer state of the art technology for diagnosis, but radiology equipment needs constant updating and there is a charitable fund for this. If you would like to make a donation, please send a cheque to the address below. Cheques should be made payable to GHNHSFT.

Please send your donation to:

**The Business Manager**

Department of Radiology

Address as on your appointment letter

Content reviewed: January 2020