

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Patient Education & Preparation Instructions

What is Magnetic Resonance Imaging?

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) uses radio waves and a strong magnetic field, rather than x-rays, to provide clear and detailed pictures of internal organs and tissues of virtually any part of your body.

What Does an MRI Unit Look Like?

The MRI unit is a large tube surrounded by a circular magnet in which the patient lies without moving for several minutes at a time.

Where is the MRI Unit Located?

The MRI scanner is located in the imaging services department of Aspirus Riverview Hospital.

How Do I Prepare for My MRI?

Because the strong magnetic field used for MRI will pull on any ferromagnetic metal object on - or implanted in - the body, MRI staff will ask whether you have a heart pacemaker (or artificial heart valve), implanted port, infusion catheter, intrauterine device, aneurysm clip in the brain, or any metal plates, pins, screws or surgical staples in your body. In most cases, surgical staples, pins, plates and screws pose no risk during a MRI if they have been in place for at least 4 to 6 weeks. Some dyes used in tattoos and patches used for medications contain metallic iron oxide and could heat up during a MRI. However, this is rare.

You will be asked if you ever had a bullet or shrapnel in your body, or ever worked with metal. If there is any question of metal fragments, especially in the eye, you may be asked to have an x-ray that will detect any such metals. Tooth fillings and braces are not affected by the magnetic field, but they may distort images of the facial area or brain.

If you are currently nursing, you may be asked to discard breast milk for 24 hours after your MRI scan.

To avoid appointment delays, pre-registration is required prior to your date of service.

How is the Procedure Performed?

The patient is placed on a sliding table and positioned comfortably for the MRI examination. The body part to be imaged is moved into the center of the magnet.

You will be given ear plugs or headphones because of the loud tapping, knocking noise when the scans start.

The exam usually takes between 30 to 60 minutes. The length of the exam varies depending on patient movement. Any movement will cause blurry pictures and have to be repeated, thus extending the length of the examination. If you are unable to lie still or are claustrophobic, please talk to your doctor about it. You may be able to get something to relax you.

The technologist will be in the console room performing your scan. An intercom system enables you to communicate with the MRI staff at any time.

Some MRI exams may require an injection of contrast material to enhance the image. Therefore, you may need an IV started.

A lab test is required on all patients with any of the following risk factors. This lab test checks your kidney function. We need to know your kidneys are working properly before we inject a contrast agent.

- Kidney (renal) disease, failure, dialysis or transplant
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Liver (hepatic) disease or liver transplant
- Over the age of 60

What Happens After My MRI Scan?

You should feel no ill effects from the MRI scan. You may go about your normal daily routine.

The radiologist will interpret your scan and a report will be sent to your doctor.

Please feel free to talk to the technician about any questions or concerns you may have.

* If you are on dialysis and you receive IV contrast, you will need to have dialysis within 2 hours of your MRI test.

Procedures

- **MRA** This is imaging of the blood vessels. No preparation is necessary. The patient may need to change into a gown and robe.
- **MRI OF EXTREMITIES** No preparation is necessary.
- **MRI OF BRAIN AND/OR NECK** No preparation is necessary. Dentures need to be removed.
- **MRI ABDOMEN AND/OR PELVIS** No preparation is necessary. The patient may need to change into a gown and robe.
- **MRCP OF ABDOMEN** Nothing to eat or drink four hours before this exam. The patient may need to change into a gown and robe. This is an abdominal exam specifically ordered to look at the biliary system and related organs.
- **SPINE** No preparation is necessary.

Aspirus Riverview Hospital Imaging Services Department 715-421-7430

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Stop by the Registration Department in Aspirus Riverview Hospital's Lobby Rotunda

Monday-Thursday 8 am-5:30 pm; Friday 8 am-5 pm; Or call 715-421-7499

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let Aspirus Riverview Hospital's Imaging Services Department know as soon as possible. Should you be admitted to the hospital, please inform your physician about your appointment.



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