

Information for patients having a Cardiac MRI scan

What is an MRI scan?

An MRI Scanner is a large magnet which uses a computer to produce pictures of the inside of the body.

How long will it take?

You are advised to allow up to one and a half hours in the MRI Department for the examination to be completed. This is not the time in the scanner.

Do I have to do anything before I come?

It is important that you read the safety information in the appointment letter carefully. Please fill in the safety questionnaire and bring it with you to your appointment

If you have a CARDIAC PACEMAKER fitted you cannot have an MRI scan.

Please let us know before your appointment if you have ever had METAL FRAGMENTS in your eyes.

You may be asked not have anything to drink that contains caffeine for 24 hours before the scan.

This includes tea, coffee and all fizzy drinks.

If you have asthma please contact us before the scan.

It is important that you do not use any lotions or creams on your chest as the examination involves a heart trace (ECG).

We would prefer not to scan any patients that may be pregnant. You must let us know if you are pregnant before the day of the scan.

What will happen before the scan?

The MRI staff will go through the safety questionnaire about your medical history with you. You may be asked to change into an examination gown and hospital trousers. Lockers are provided to store your belongings. It is important you do not enter the scan room with any metal objects.

The radiographer will need to put either one or two small plastic tubes into veins in your hand or arm for an injection of MRI 'dye' and an 'exercise injection'. One injection ('dye') is given to show up the blood supply to the heart. If required the second injection is given to convince your heart that you are exercising.

What happens during the MRI scan?

You will be asked to lie on a flat table. 3 patches will be stuck to your chest for a heart trace. The table will move slowly into the scanner. The scanner makes a loud tapping sound but it

is PAINLESS. You will be able to talk to the radiographer through a microphone built into the scanner. You can also alert the radiographer by squeezing a hand button. You can stop the scan at any time. The radiographer will give you breathing instructions. Your blood pressure is monitored for part of the scan.

It is very important that you do not move during the scan mwhich will take approximately 60 minutes.

Are there any risks or side effects?

The exercise injection can cause headaches some chest tightness and flushing. There is a small chance of an allergic reaction to the dye and exercise injection. Current evidence suggests there are no known side effects from an MRI scan.

When will I get the Results?

The scans need to be processed by the computer and examined so we will not be able to give you the results straight away. The radiographer will advise you where and when to receive your results.