



Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

A magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan is a type of imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and radio waves to create detailed, cross-sectional images of the body.



What to Expect

MRI uses magnetic fields and radio waves to create cross-sectional images. The images are best used to visualize soft tissue, such as muscles, tendons, and blood vessels. You will need to remove any metallic objects, including jewelry, and change into a hospital gown before entering the machine. Prior to the MRI, you may be administered a special dye, known as contrast, that highlights tumors or inflammation. The contrast will be given through an intravenous (IV) line. You will then lie down on a table, and your head will lay in a special headrest that minimizes movement. You must stay still during the exam to produce the highest resolution images. The table will be rolled into the MRI machine, which resembles a large donut or tunnel. The machine makes loud noises as it creates the images, and you can request earplugs to dampen the sound, if needed. The space is somewhat small, which may cause some patients to experience feelings of claustrophobia. These feelings are normal, and the technicians can offer strategies to help you remain calm and cope with this sensation.

The scan will likely last around 30 to 60 minutes. All MRI scanners are equipped with a microphone so that you may communicate with the technician during the test if you need assistance or reassurance. The results will take time to process after the MRI is complete. Typically, the doctor will call to discuss the MRI results with you once they are ready. You should coordinate with their care provider about following up after an MRI scan.



Please note that this information is intended for educational purposes. It does not replace consultation with your doctor, and it should not be interpreted as medical advice. We encourage you to speak to your health care provider if you have further questions or concerns regarding your medical care.

For more information scan this code or visit:

<https://thancguide.org/cancer-basics/diagnosis/imaging/mri/>

While MRI scans are commonly used as a diagnostic tool at the beginning of your treatment journey, your doctor may also request intermittent follow-up scans to monitor your treatment.

Advantages

- Most sensitive imaging technique of the head.
- Used to diagnose and visualize a tumor or determine if cancer has spread.
- Details from MRI images can help determine the stage of a tumor.
- Best for soft tissue, such as muscles, tendons, blood vessels.
- Images of soft tissue are more detailed than those of a CT scan.
- Safe and generally risk-free, with no radiation involved.

Disadvantages

- Lasts longer and costs more than a CT scan.
- You must remain still during the scan.
- Individuals with implanted metal may not be able to undergo an MRI scan.
- You may experience some claustrophobia during the scan, as the MRI machine is a small space.



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