

Get Ready for your MRI



What is an MRI?

The letters “MRI” are short for Magnetic Resonance Imaging. An MRI machine is a large magnet shaped like a giant donut that takes pictures of the inside of your body. It will not touch or hurt you.



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When you get here, visit the registration desk then walk to the radiology waiting room to check-in.

Your caregiver can start filling out paperwork as you wait for a staff member to call your name.



Waiting Area

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You and your caregiver will go into a private waiting room. Here, you change out of your clothes, including undergarments, and put on hospital clothing.

After changing, you may meet an MRI technologist and child life specialist who will talk with you about your pictures.

You'll also get to pick out a movie to watch during your MRI.



MRI Safety Check

When it is time for your MRI, you will walk with your MRI technologist and one caregiver to the MRI safety check area.

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In this area, you and your caregivers will remove anything you have with metal and store it in a locker. This includes items like earrings, body jewelry, bobby pins, and watches. Caregivers who have metal in their undergarments or clothing may be asked to remove these items or change.

Everyone who will be going into the MRI room will stand in front of a machine that checks for metal to make sure it is safe for them to go in.



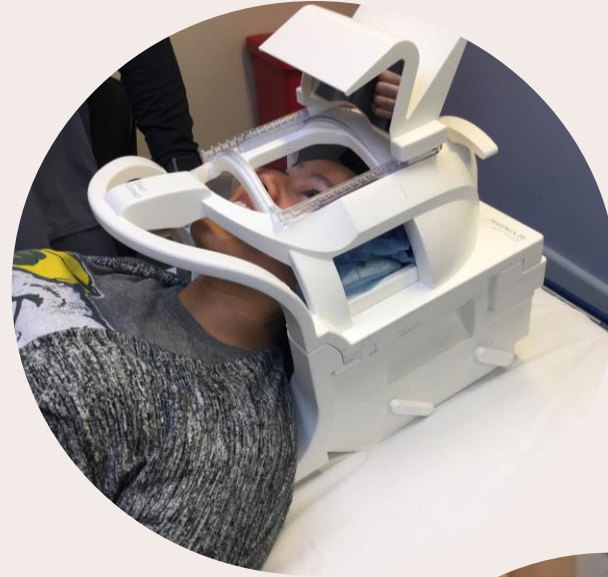
MRI Room

In the MRI room, you will lay down on the bed and be given blankets to get comfortable.

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MRI technologists will also set up tools called “coils.” These help the MRI take pictures of a specific body part. Some coils are placed above your head and are shaped like a football helmet with holes to see and breathe. Other coils rest on top of the body and look like a thick yoga mat.

You will be given a call-ball to squeeze if you need something during your pictures.





Caregiver Seating

Talk with your MRI technologist to decide the best place for your caregivers to sit during your pictures. They may be able to sit:

- 1) In the waiting room
- 2) Inside the MRI room, near the door
- 3) Inside the MRI room, next to your bedside
- 4) Inside the MRI room, near the TV so you can see them the whole time

Inside the MRI Machine

Once everything is set up, the MRI bed will move inside the MRI tunnel. Kids usually say that being in an MRI tunnel is like a tube slide at the playground and waterpark. The tunnel is open at both ends, does not move, and stays the same size.

At one end of the tunnel, there is a TV so you can choose a movie to watch during your pictures.



During an MRI

The MRI makes loud sounds while taking pictures. These sounds are normal for the machine, even though they may sound strange. Once the pictures start, everyone in the room will wear earplugs to protect their hearing. Earplugs feel like mini marshmallows inside your ear. You will also use over-the-ear headphones to hear the movie you chose.

During an MRI, your job is to lie as still as possible. The pictures may be blurry if you move even a little bit. It is okay to breathe and blink like normal.





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Scan Time and Results

Most MRIs last between 3 and 90 minutes, but the length depends the body part being scanned.

The radiologist will review your MRI pictures within a couple of days. The results will be available through your MyChart account and through the doctor who ordered the MRI.



Preparing for your MRI

Many kids find it helpful to practice lying still at home for 2-3 minutes, working their way up to 5 minutes.

Planning for MRI Success

There are lots of different ways to help kids during their MRI. What things would you like an adult to help you with?

To help me hold still, it would be helpful for someone to...

- Tell me how long each picture is
- Tell me before I hear MRI noises
- Remind me to hold still before each picture
- Tell me when I am doing a good job
- Let me sleep during my pictures and talk only when needed

MRIs with Contrast

Some kids need contrast for their MRI. If this is the case for you, please review the following slides.



What is contrast? What is an IV?

Some kids need picture water called contrast during their MRI. Contrast helps highlight certain parts of the picture. If you need an MRI with contrast, you will get an IV.

An IV, short for intravenous, is a small tube or straw that is usually inserted in a vein in your hand or arm. A small needle is used to insert the IV straw into the vein. Once the IV straw is inside the vein, the needle comes out. The nurse can put some numbing medicine on your skin, so you feel the needle less!

A child life specialist can:

- Make sure you are prepared for the IV
- Help you create a plan to make the IV as easy as possible



Steps to get an IV



First, the MRI technologist will tie a rubber band called a tourniquet on your arm. This band will squeeze your arm and make your veins bigger and easier to see.



The MRI technologist sometimes puts a warm pack over the skin to make your veins even bigger and easier to see.



Next, the MRI technologist will clean your hand or arm with a wipe that looks like this. The wipe is used to clean off germs.



Some kids can use a J-tip with numbing medicine to help them not feel the poke as much. The J-tip is not a shot. Ask your MRI technologist if you can try this!



The numbing medicine in the J-tip makes a loud noise, like opening a soda can, but it should not hurt. Your MRI technologist or child life specialist can tell you when the sound is coming.



The J-tip will splash numbing medicine onto your skin and usually leaves a small, temporary mark.



Next, the MRI technologist will clean your hand or arm with a sponge. The wipe is used to clean off germs.



Next, the small needle will go into the area where the numbing medicine was placed.

Taking deep breaths can help you hold your arm still to make this easier!

PROPRIETARY AND CONFIDENTIAL

Ways to help my body stay calm for my IV

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Buzzy Bee is a tool that can distract you from feeling the needle. Buzzy Bee vibrates on your hand or arm.

You can also squeeze a stress ball to help remind your body to relax.





The needle will come out once the IV is in the right place. The MRI technologist will then put saline through your IV straw to make sure it's working correctly.

Some kids say it feels cold or “weird” going in. Other kids say it tastes or smells salty.



Last, the MRI technologist will put tape or stickers on your IV to keep it in place.



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Before you go home, the MRI technologist will remove the IV. Some kids say that it feels like a bandage coming off when it is taken out.

Planning for IV Success

I'd like my technologist to:

- Tell me before each step and countdown
- Stay quiet and let me think about other things

During the IV, I want to:

- watch the IV happen
- to look away until the IV is finished

Which choices in each category will be the most helpful to you when your IV is placed?

How I can help my body to stay calm during the IV:

To help me during my IV placement, I would like to (you can choose more than one) :

- Use a J-Tip
- Use Buzzy Bee
- Take deep breaths
- Play iSpy or a tablet game
- Squeeze a stress ball or my caregiver's hand
- Talk to my caregiver or a child life specialist



thank you

We hope that this presentation has helped prepare you for your upcoming MRI. Feel free to visit our website at <https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/helping-children-cope-with-mri-scans> to learn more.

For additional questions, please contact our Dallas Child Life team at KidsCan@childrens.com or Plano Child Life team at ChildLifeLegacy@childrens.com.

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