

MRI Spine (Cervical, Thoracic, Lumbar, Sacrum/Coccyx)

What to expect when you arrive:

Please arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment time in order to register and complete an MRI questionnaire and any other necessary paperwork. When you arrive in the MRI department, you will be asked to remove all personal possessions such as your watch, wallet, car keys, etc. Lockers will be provided for your belongings. You may also be asked to put on a patient gown. **Please inform the technologist prior to your exam if you have a history of renal impairment or are currently pregnant.**

What is MRI?

MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, is a wonderful imaging tool, which provides great detail of the internal structures of the body without using radiation. MRI uses a magnetic field, radio waves, and a computer to generate clear, exceptionally detailed "pictures" of the area of interest. MRI itself is a painless procedure.

How to prepare for your procedure:

Please wear loose, comfortable clothing without metal snaps or zippers. If you are claustrophobic (fear of tight spaces) or unable to lie flat comfortably, please contact your physician prior to your MRI for special instructions. While the great majority of people can undergo an MRI exam with no problems, some cannot. If you have any of the following implanted metallic objects you may **NOT** have an MRI:

- A cardiac pacemaker
- Neurostimulator (TENS or ANS unit)
- Cochlear (ear) implant

If you have any of the following implanted metallic objects, please contact the MRI department at 770-538-7601 prior to your procedure:

- Implanted drug infusion device
- Cerebral aneurysm clips (brain clips)
- Heart stent
- Artificial heart valve
- Metallic fragments within the eye

For some MRI exams, an IV contrast (dye) called gadolinium may be injected into a vein to better define the area being imaged. Unlike IV contrast that is used in other parts of radiology, the MRI contrast does not contain iodine and therefore rarely causes allergic reactions.

No preparation is required for this examination. Eat and take any prescribed medication as usual, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

Recovery/Home:

You may return to your normal diet and activities right away. If you were given contrast, it will pass naturally through your body within 18 to 24 hours. It will be colorless and odorless. The radiologist will interpret the exam and send the results to your physician's office.

Patient Information

