



## 3T MRI

### What to expect from your scan

#### What is MRI?

MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) is a safe, non-invasive procedure that uses radio waves, a magnet and computer software to get two and three dimensional (3D) images of inside the body. Its main advantage is that it does not use radiation and can detect problems such as injuries and diseases in their early stages, especially in soft tissue.

#### What is a 3T MRI?

A 3T MRI Scanner is an extremely powerful diagnostic tool. Our state of the art 3T Scanner takes high resolution pictures in less time, shortening scan times and improving quality even on very small body structures; enabling more accurate diagnosis.

Our new Philips scanner has a wider bore (70 cm) than regular MRI Scanners (60 cm). To optimise your comfort, special technology reduces the loud noise of the equipment, an auto voice function offers guidance throughout your scan, and a ComfortPlus mattress provides enhanced support compared with standard MRI cushions.

Soothing ambient light inside the scanning room facilitates a calmer scanning experience. You can personalise your experience by selecting a video theme. The video is projected onto the wall and viewed via a mirror to offer an immersive scanning experience.



#### What if I feel anxious in MRI scanners?

Our team are skilled at supporting nervous patients and do their utmost to make patients feel as comfortable and at ease as possible throughout their scans.

#### What if I feel anxious in MRIs scanners? - *Continued*

You are welcome to bring a friend or relative with you inside the scanning room (provided they meet all safety requirements).

If you are feeling particularly apprehensive, we can arrange a pre-visit to our Centre to allow you to see the scanner. Please contact us if you wish to arrange this.

#### Is MRI safe?

All our scans are safe and there are no known side effects associated with MRI. MRI does not use ionising radiation so can be carried out without any negative effects.

You will not feel any pain from our scanning machine and our team will do their utmost to make sure you feel as comfortable and at ease as possible during your scan.

You will be asked to fill in a safety questionnaire at the time of your scan to ensure you are safe to enter the MRI room to prevent any risks. If you are pregnant and in your first trimester you will not be able to undergo any diagnostic imaging as it can be harmful to unborn babies.

#### How do I prepare for my scan?

You do not need to do anything special to prepare for your MRI scan. If you are having a scan of your abdomen you must avoid eating for 4 hours before your scan. If you are having a scan of your gall bladder or pancreas you must also avoid drinking one hour before your scan. If a contrast injection is advised, you should also have no food 2 hours before the appointment time.

If you are breastfeeding and require a contrast injection as part of your scan (see further details on contrast injections on the next page), you may wish to express milk ahead of your scan, as you are advised to stop breastfeeding for a period of 24 hours after you have had the contrast injection.

#### What can I expect on the day of my scan?

You will need to arrive 15 minutes before your appointment time. During this time we will ask you to complete an MRI safety questionnaire. Once we have reviewed your questionnaire we will decide whether to go ahead with your scan.

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#### What can I expect on the day of my scan? - Continued

It is very important to be accurate when answering the questions. We may ask you to provide further information about any implants you may have before we know if it will be safe for you to have the scan. If you were given an information card for an implanted device in your body, please send a copy of it to our bookings team prior to the appointment or bring it with you on the day.

You will be provided with a gown to change into. All metal, including jewellery, is prohibited due to the magnetic field in the scanning room. The radiographer will check that you have removed anything containing metal prior to your scan to ensure all safety requirements are met. You will have access to a locker for storing your belongings during the scan.

#### How long will it take?

The scan will usually take approximately 30 minutes for each part of the body being scanned.

#### What can I expect during my scan?

The radiographer will position you on a special couch. They may put a surface coil around the part of your body being scanned (for example, the shoulder). Surface coils act like an antenna to receive the radio waves from the MRI system.

Once you are in the correct position, the radiographer will move the couch until the area of your body being scanned is in the centre of the scanning machine's magnetic field.

The radiographer will be able to see, hear and speak to you at all times through an intercom and viewing window, and will give you simple directions during the scan.

It is important that you stay completely still during the scan. The radiographer may even ask you to hold your breath at certain points. This is because movement can blur the images, making the scan less accurate.

You will be able to communicate with the radiographer through an intercom at any point during the scan.

#### What can I expect during my scan? – Continued

As the main magnetic field strength is altered during the scan, electromagnetic coils produce a wide range of sounds throughout your scan including banging, buzzing and rumbling noises.

#### Will I need a contrast injection?

Some patients may need a contrast injection to help make the images clearer, usually in parts of the body which have poor natural contrast. Contrast is a special liquid that highlights body tissue to make subtle differences or disease easier to see and diagnose. The contrast will be injected through a small tube, called a cannula, in your arm.

Allergic reactions to contrast are rare. However, if you feel discomfort at any time during the scan, or if you feel sick, please inform the radiographer.

#### What happens after my scan?

You may eat and drink as usual and return to your normal daily routine straightaway.

If you had a contrast injection, we advise you to drink plenty of fluids to help flush the contrast out of your urinary system.

Please check the skin where we injected you for signs of infection (for example, redness, soreness or weeping) over the next 24 hours. It is normal to experience some bruising in the area where we injected you once the needle has been removed.

If you see any signs of infection, or if you experience any of the rare side effects, including nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, itchiness, or a rash on the body, please contact your doctor or visit a local A&E department immediately.

#### How do I receive my results?

After your scan, if you are a private patient the radiographer will provide you with a CD of your images to take away. (We do not usually issue CDs for non-private patients, unless the doctor or consultant who referred you has asked us to).

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#### How do I receive my results? – *Continued*

A radiologist will write a report and send it to the doctor or consultant who referred you, usually within 48 hours. Your report will contain a summary of the radiologist's findings and their recommendations for further follow-up.

You will need to arrange an appointment to discuss your report with the doctor or consultant who referred you for the scan.

#### Our chaperone service

All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure if they feel it is necessary. This chaperone may be a family member or friend. Sometimes it may be necessary for a formal chaperone (for example, a trained member of staff) to be present.

Please let us know before your appointment if you would like a chaperone.

#### Further questions

If you have any further questions or worries please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of our team. Your comfort and safety is of utmost importance to us.

For further information, including contact details and directions on how to find us, please visit our website:

[www.harleystreet-medicalcentre.com](http://www.harleystreet-medicalcentre.com).

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We are committed to providing clean, safe premises for our clients in line with the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Code of Practice on the Prevention and Control of Infections and related guidance (December 2010) and all other Department of Health guidance.