

PROSTATE MRI

What is a MRI of the Prostate?

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a non-invasive way of evaluating the prostate without the use of radiation. MRI uses a powerful magnetic field, radio waves and a computer to provide detailed images of the prostate.

Common Uses

- Evaluation for prostate cancer and its extent of spread locally.
- Infection (prostatitis) or prostate abscess.
- An enlarged prostate, called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)
- Abnormal conditions present at birth
- Complications after pelvic surgery.

Safety

MRI scanners do not use X-rays. Instead, they use a strong magnet and radiofrequency waves. Because of this powerful magnet, it is vital that you remove all metallic belongings in advance of an MRI exam, including watches, jewelry, and items of clothing that have metallic threads or fasteners. In certain cases, you may not be able to have an MRI and will need to discuss alternatives with your doctor. Patients with any kind of metallic implant anywhere in their body should not have an MRI unless their physician is fully aware of the device and has approved the MRI exam. Under no circumstances should a patient who has a pacemaker have an MRI without prior clearance from their physician/cardiologist.

Medications

It is important for you to keep to your regular medication schedule. Just let our staff know what medications you have taken prior to your MRI exam.

Food and drink

There are no restrictions on what you may eat or drink before a typical MRI test.

When to arrive

Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled exam.

What to wear

For MRI scans, you should wear comfortable clothing; however, you may have to change into a hospital gown. If you are wearing anything metallic, such as jewelry, dentures, eyeglasses, or hearing aids that might interfere with the MRI scan, we will ask you to remove them. You should not have your credit cards in your pockets during the scan because the MRI magnet can affect the magnetic strip on the card. Makeup and nail polish that contain metal particles should be removed if applied to the area undergoing the MRI examination.

Intravenous preparation

Many of our patients receive a contrast agent intravenously during their MRI scan to give a more detailed picture of the prostate. If your doctor has determined that contrast will be needed, the technologist will place an IV in your arm prior to you going into the scanner.

Other preparation

You will be given instructions regarding the use of an enema prior to the procedure. You should also not eat or drink anything 4 hours prior to the exam.

Scanning

The MRI will require the patient to be in a supine position (on back) for approximately 1 hour.

Contrast medium

If you are over 60, or have kidney disease, diabetes, lupus or multiple myeloma, you may need a blood test before hand to make sure the contrast is safe.

Results

Exams will be interpreted and sent to the ordering physician typically within one working day.