



SHAUKAT KHANUM MEMORIAL CANCER HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE

# **MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI)**

**Patient Information**

**Leaflet #: 7-4**

**7-A Block, R-3, M.A Johar Town, Lahore-Pakistan.  
Phone #: 042 – 5945100, UAN: 111-155-555**

## **What is an MR scan?**

An MR scanner uses a magnetic field to build up detailed pictures of various parts of the body. Computer systems and radio waves help with this but no radiation is used. The scan is also called **MRI** (Magnetic Resonance Imaging).

## **Who can have an MR scan?**

Your doctor will decide if an MR scan would be helpful in your case. However, some people aren't able to have this scan, for example if:

- you have a heart pacemaker in place
- you have had any of the valves in your heart replaced by metal ones
- you have had an operation to stop bleeding in your brain
- you have any brain surgery requiring placement of metal clips in the brain
- You have worked with a machine which turns metal at high speed without wearing goggles or you have ever had metal fragments removed from your eyes. You may still be able to have an MRI done but you would probably need x-rays of the skull to be sure that no metallic particles are still lodged in your eyes.

The radiographers, who carry out the scan, may ask you some questions. You may also be asked to sign a consent form.

## **What happens when you come for a scan?**

An MR scan may be performed when you are an out-patient or in-patient. When you come for your appointment please wear clothing without metal fastenings such as zips. If you are in a ward your nightclothes will probably be suitable.

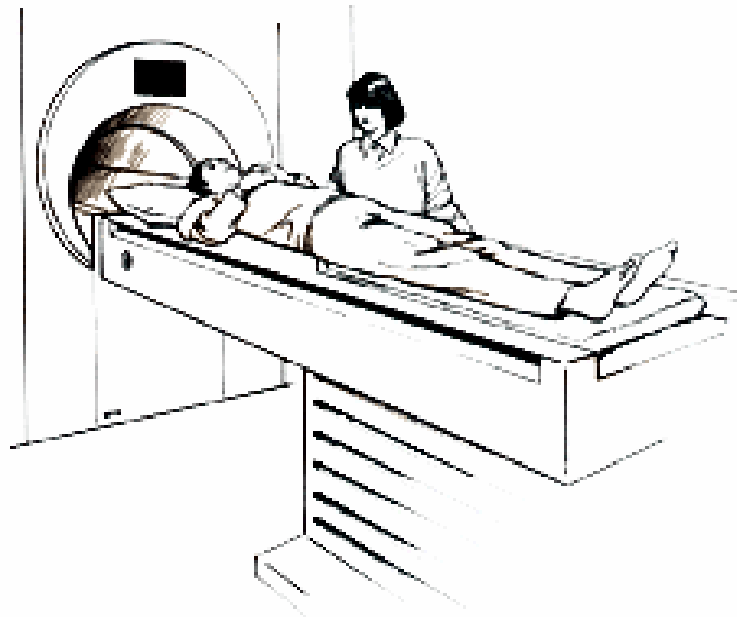
There are certain things which you can't take with you into the scanning room. The items are similar to those you are asked to leave on the side when you go through a metal detector at an airport.

They include anything metallic or magnetic such as money, all jewellery except your wedding ring, credit cards, wrist-watches and keys. You should leave these with a friend or at home.

### **What preparation will you need?**

Usually there is no special preparation for an MR scan. You may eat and drink normally before and after the scan, unless you have been told otherwise.

For abdominal and pelvic scans you may be asked to drink a fairly large amount of fluid before the scan. This is to help identify your stomach and bowel. You may also be given an injection to slow your bowel working for a short time.



You may be asked not to eat or drink for a couple of hours before your abdominal or pelvic scan.

An injection of contrast medium may be given into a vein in your arm or hand. This helps to provide clearer images. The injection may be given using a pump. Some people experience a cold sensation at the site of the injection and going up their arm. This usually lasts for a few moments.

### **Does the scan hurt?**

No, the scan isn't painful. However, you will have to lie still for up to one hour on a table which is quite hard. You may also find the position you have to lie in uncomfortable.

If you have any pain or discomfort which could lead to difficulties during the scan, please tell the doctor, radiographer or nurse before your scan.

The scanner may be very noisy at the beginning of the scan but this reduces to soft tapping sounds later. Ear plugs will usually be provided. Although the scanner is opened at both ends, some people find it very dreadful because your whole body has to pass through the machine. If you are worried about this, please speak to your doctor or the person performing the scan.

### **What happens afterwards?**

As soon as the scan is completed you may get ready to go home or back to your hospital ward. You may go to the toilet and eat and drink as usual.

If you have had an injection before your scan (to slow your bowel working) you may be asked to wait for half an hour before you go home. This is because the injection may cause blurring of vision.

### **Will there be any side effects?**

Not usually.

### **Is it safe to drive home?**

Yes, it is.

### **When will you know the results?**

Although the person carrying out your scan can see parts of your body on the screen, the images must be carefully interpreted by an expert radiologist. S/he will prepare a report and send it to your doctor a few days later. Your doctor will tell you the results and discuss them with you.

### **What if you can't keep your MR appointment?**

If you can't keep your appointment, please contact the MR department as soon as possible.

If you are admitted to hospital before your appointment, please tell the ward staff that you have an MR appointment booked.

## **Where can you get help?**

If you have any queries or problems related to your health, please contact:

Radiology Department of Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre Lahore

Phone #: 0092 - 42 - 5945100

Ext.: 2499, 2299, 2294 (Radiology Reception)

Day: Monday – Friday

Time: 8:00am – 5:00pm

**Reference:** CancerBacup (UK)