

## Preparing Your Patient for a MRI

There are only a few absolute contraindications for MRI. Patients are excluded from a MRI if they have any of the following:

- Cardiac pacemaker or implantable defibrillator
- Catheter that has metal components that may pose a risk of a burn injury
- A metal clip placed to prevent bleeding from an intracranial aneurysm or any clip in the brain without documentation
- A cochlear (inner ear) implant without documentation
- Metallic foreign body within or near the eye (an object such as this can generally be seen on an x-ray, and may require a prescreen of the orbits, especially if you are or have previously been a metal.)

Before the exam, the patient will be asked to fill out a screening form asking about anything that might create a health risk or interfere with imaging. Items that need to be removed by patients and individuals before entering the MRI room include:

- Purse, wallet, money clip, credit cards, cards with magnetic strips
- Electronic devices such as beepers or cell phones
- Hearing aids
- Metal jewelry, watches
- Pens, paper clips, keys, coins
- Hair barrettes, hairpins
- Any article of clothing that has a metal zipper, buttons, snaps, hooks, underwire bras, or metal threads
- Shoes, belt buckles, safety pins

The patient will sign a consent form; change into a patient gown, lock up put their personal items, and hang key inside the scan room during the exam. The patient may bring music such as a CD iPod / MP3 player or phone if compatible with our system. The MRI table will move during the study and make loud metallic hammering noises.

Objects that may interfere with the image quality if close to the area being scanned but, do not pose a significant health risk include:

- Cardiac stents or metallic heart valves as long as it they have been in place longer than 8 weeks.
- Metallic spinal rod
- Plates, pins, screws, or metal mesh used to repair a bone or joint
- Joint replacement or prosthesis (the Technologist must be notified prior to entering the scan room prior to exam. May need to remove if necessary.)
- Bullet, shrapnel or other types of metal fragments
- Dental fillings (while usually unaffected by the magnetic field, they may distort images of the facial area, brain and cervical spine; the same is true for orthodontic braces and retainers)
- Some tattoos or tattooed eyeliner (there is a chance of skin irritation or swelling with black, blue, red and metallic pigments. Fresh tattoos have the most reaction.)

Claustrophobia can be a problem for some; however, our magnet has a larger diameter opening and is open on both ends to help with the feeling of being confined.

There are no known risks of having an MRI when one is pregnant; however, we do not image pregnant patients routinely. The Radiologist will review on a case-by-case basis if an exception needs to be made. Breast-feeding should be avoided for 24 hours after an exam that requires an injection of contrast. The maximum operational weight limit for the MRI table is 400 pounds.

