



North Ottawa Community Health System

Magnetic Resonance Imaging Preparation

What is Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)?

MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, is a means of “seeing” inside of the body in order for doctors to find certain diseases or abnormal conditions. MRI does not rely on any type of radiation (i.e., ionizing radiation) like that used for an x-ray or CT scan. The MRI examination requires specialized equipment that uses a powerful, constant magnetic field, radiofrequency energy, and dedicated equipment including a powerful computer to create very clear pictures of internal body structures.

This is contraindicated for pregnant patients.

How do I prepare for the exam?

*There’s no special preparation necessary for most of the MRI examinations. If you are having an **MRI of your abdomen or pelvis** you will need to be **NPO (nothing to eat or drink) 4-6 hours** prior to your examination. **Continue to take any medication prescribed** by your doctor unless otherwise directed.*

*If the MRI examination you are scheduled for requires that you receive the **MRI contrast (gadolinium)** and you are **over the age of 60** or have a **history of kidney disease (Diabetes, Renal Insufficiency, Hypertension, taking nephrotoxic medications or myeloma)**, then labs will need to be drawn within 10 days prior to your MRI to check your kidney function.*

MRI Precautions

Before the MRI procedure, you will be asked to fill out a screening form asking about anything that might create a health risk or interfere with the examination. An MRI technologist will review your paperwork with you to ensure that you understood the questions on the form. Even if you have undergone an MRI procedure before at this or another facility, you will still be asked to complete the MRI screening form.

Also, in order to prevent metallic objects from being attracted to the magnet of the MRI system the technologist doing your procedure will review a list of items or things that may be a hazard or problem during an MRI exam, which includes:

- Pacemaker, pacing wires, internal cardioverter defibrillator (ICD)
- Neurostimulation System
- Aneurysm clip in the brain
- Metallic implant
- Implanted drug infusion device
- Bone growth stimulator and/or unremoved wires from stimulator
- Foreign metal objects, especially if in or near the eye

If you have any of these items, please notify your physician prior to your MRI appointment.