



Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Non-Sedated

Our Mission

Nicklaus Children's Hospital's mission to inspire hope and promote lifelong health by providing the best care to every child. We focus on family-centered care in order to provide an optimal experience for patients and their families. We believe that parents and guardians play a vital role in the success of this test and want you to have an active role in your child's healthcare. The following information is to help prepare both you and your child for the scheduled exam.

What is an MRI?

- An MRI is a camera that uses a large magnet (not radiation), to take detailed, two and three-dimensional pictures of a child's organs, tissues and bones.
- An MRI helps to find a diagnosis and treatment plan.
- An MRI does not use radiation, but instead uses magnets. You and your child must be screened for any metal inside the body and will be asked to remove any jewelry, or clothing, that contain metal before entering the MRI suite.
- Any personal belongings that contain metal can be locked in a secure cabinet during the scan.
- After being screened, one caregiver may accompany the child during the MRI.
- *Women who are pregnant are not permitted in the MRI room during the scan.* Please plan to come with someone who can stay with your child during the scan.
- All other visitors must stay in the waiting room and any children must be supervised by someone 18 years old or older.
- The MRI is an open tunnel with a bed attached which moves in and out of the tunnel. The tunnel never touches the child. Some children say the MRI looks like a spaceship or a doughnut!
- An MRI scan *is not painful*.
- In order to get the best results, it is very important that the child *holds still* for the scan.
- Depending on the type of scan, the time it takes to complete an MRI can range between 30 minutes to two hours (most MRIs of the brain may take about 45 minutes).

What to Expect During the Procedure

Step 1: Getting Ready

- You and your child will be walked from the waiting room to an exam room (which is like a "Get Ready Room") where a nurse will perform the child's vital signs and review the medical history.
- ***Some*** MRIs are ordered with "contrast", a special water-like liquid used to help see details of the body part being scanned.



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- **Contrast**
 - Can be given two ways:
 - 1) By mouth
 - 2) Given through IV catheters (a tiny, plastic straw inserted into the vein in the hand or arm).
 - *Depending on the case, numbing medicine may be used to help your child feel as comfortable as possible during the IV placement.*
- ***Please bring your child's favorite toy or activity to provide distraction while being in the room.***

Step 2: Taking Pictures

- Next, you and your child will be taken into the MRI room, or the "Picture Room", where they will see a long table attached to a tunnel-like scanner where the MRI camera is located.
- Once your child lies down, the technologist will secure the child with a Velcro seatbelt.
- A "coil" (plastic shield) will also be placed over the part of the body being scanned. Don't worry, this does not hurt!
- When the scan begins, the bed will slowly move through the tunnel then stop and stay in place for the scan.
- The MRI never touches your child and does not hurt. It only takes pictures.
- As it takes pictures, the MRI machine will make sounds similar to knocking and honking noises.
- You and your child will be given foam earplugs to help shield the noise from your ears.

Fun Features

- Depending on the type of scan and MRI machine your child is assigned, there may be an opportunity to watch a movie or listen to music during the exam. *On the day of the exam, please ask the staff if this is available.*

Step 3: Results

Your doctor will contact you within 48 to 72 business hours after the exam.

Child Life Specialists

A part of the Child Life Specialist's role in the Radiology Department is to help children and families cope with the anxiety and fear associated with medical procedures. A Child Life Specialist may be available on the day of the exam to provide education and coping strategies. For more information, please contact Nicklaus Children's Hospital's Children's Experiences Department at 305-666-6511 extension 4875 and select #1.