

## Frequently asked questions

**Q** What does the scanner look like?

**A** The scanner is an arched structure which is wide open on both ends. It is well light and ventilated.

**Q** Does MRI involve an injection?

**A** On rare occasions an injection of MRI dye called gadolinium is required to give added information depending on the area being scanned. This is a small injection into the arm. It is not always possible to know in advance if you require an injection. The radiographer will provide you with all the necessary information on the day.

**Q** May I have an MRI exam when I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

**A** MRI is not recommended during pregnancy except in exceptional circumstances. If you are pregnant or think you might be, please tell your doctor before scheduling your exam.

It is totally safe to have an MRI while breast feeding however if you have an injection of MRI contrast it is recommended you wait 48hours before beginning to breast feed again.

**Q** How is MRI different from a CT or an x-ray?

**A** Unlike x-ray exams, MRI does not use ionizing (x-ray) radiation. Instead, MR creates high-quality images through the combination of a strong magnetic field and radio waves.

**Q** Why is the scanner so noisy?

**A** The scanner is a very strong magnet. During the scan smaller electromagnets are constantly switching on and off causing a loud knocking sound.

**Q** What if I am claustrophobic?

**A** Although most people are able to tolerate this exam well, some become very anxious inside the scanner. If you know that you become very uncomfortable in small, enclosed spaces, please tell our staff or your doctor before scheduling your exam and arrangements can be made address this.

## Contacting Us

If you have any questions about your examination or there is something you think we should be aware of prior to your procedure, please contact Diagnostic Imaging:

**Telephone: 01 526 2060**



**SPORTS SURGERY CLINIC**  
*Specialists in Joint Replacement, Spinal Surgery,  
Orthopaedics and Sport Injuries*

Santry Demesne, Dublin 9  
Telephone: 01 526 2060  
E-mail: [radiology@sportssurgeryclinic.com](mailto:radiology@sportssurgeryclinic.com)  
[www.sportssurgeryclinic.com](http://www.sportssurgeryclinic.com)



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# Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

[www.sportssurgeryclinic.com](http://www.sportssurgeryclinic.com)

## Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Produces detailed images of the structures inside the body. As the name suggests it uses strong magnets to produce the images. At SSC we have a 3Tesla MRI scanner which is currently the strongest MRI available for clinical use and has the capability of producing scans of the highest quality. MRI is very safe. There are no health risks associated with the magnetic field or the radio waves used by the machine nor have any side effects been reported.



## Making an appointment

A referral letter from a Medical Practitioner is required in order to make an appointment. This provides the Radiographer with the necessary information to carry out the appropriate scan.

Please call **01 526 2060** to schedule an appointment.



## Preparation

There is no preparation required for the majority of MRI scans. You may continue to eat, drink and take medication as normal. It is important if you have been prescribed pain medication that you take this prior to the scan. This will not affect the results of the scan.

In many cases, you can have your MRI scan performed while wearing your own clothes. However for safety reasons we must ensure that none of your clothing contains metal that could be attracted to the magnet and interfere with your scan.

For your own safety and convenience, we ask that you observe the following:

- Wear comfortable clothes without metal zippers, safety pins, studs or buckles.
- Remove any metal containing objects such as, jewellery, hairpins, hearing aids, glasses, wigs, watches etc. Preferably leave valuables at home.
- Empty your pockets of all loose items such as money, coins, credit cards, mobile phones, keys, pens etc.
- If you are required to change a hospital gown and trousers will be provided.
- Dressing rooms and lockers for valuables are available in the MRI Department.
- It is important that you bring any previous studies that relate to this procedure with you for comparison.

Please call us prior to your appointment if you have a cardiac pacemaker, cardiac valves, implanted cardiac defibrillator, aneurysm clips, cochlear ear implants or a neurostimulator.

## The procedure

### On Arrival

Please check in at the Diagnostic Imaging reception on the ground floor. Please allow 15 minutes for checking in and preparation for the scan.

### Once Checked In

You will be seated in the MRI waiting room. A radiographer will review your questionnaire and prepare you for the scan which may involve getting changed into a gown. The procedure will be explained in detail including length of time etc. This is an excellent time to ask questions or express concerns.

### The Scan Itself

For the majority of scans you will be required to lie on your back on a cushioned table and a device called a coil will be placed around the area of your body being scanned. When you are comfortable and safely positioned, the table will move very slowly into the magnet opening. The radiographer will explain what to expect. During the exam you will hear a

knocking sound as the images are acquired. You will be provided with hearing protection. Once the exam starts it is essential to lie still, because even slight movements can cause the blurring of the images. The Radiographer will communicate with you throughout the exam via an intercom. In addition you will be given a small call bell to hold, that you may activate if the need arises. This will immediately alert the radiographer that you have a concern or a question. For the majority of scans you will be offered a choice of music from a list provided or alternately you may bring your own selection on your own MP3 player.

### Obtaining the Results

Your MRI Scan will be interpreted by a Consultant Radiologist who specialises in Musculoskeletal and Orthopaedic Imaging. Your exam will be reported on within 24 hours of your study being completed. The report is then sent to your referring Clinician. You will be contacted by your referring Clinician in due course to discuss the findings of this procedure.

