



Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the Breast

Overview:

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the breast is a noninvasive medical test that assists physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions.

MRI does not use ionizing radiation (x-rays). Using a powerful magnetic field, radio frequency pulses and a computer to produce detailed images of organs, soft tissues, bone and virtually all other internal body structures, MRI of the breast allows physicians to better evaluate many breast conditions that cannot be obtained by other imaging modalities such as mammography or ultrasound.

Common questions about Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the breast:

How is the procedure performed?

MRI of the breast will be performed as an outpatient. You will be positioned on a movable examination table face down on your stomach with your breasts hanging freely into cushioned openings. These cushioned openings are surrounded by a breast coil which is a signal receiver that works with the MRI unit to create the images.

Usually a contrast material will be used in the MRI of the breast exam. A technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your hand or arm. A saline solution will drip through the IV to prevent blockage of the IV line until the contrast material is injected.

You will be moved through the magnet of the MRI unit and the technologist will leave the room during the examination. If a contrast material is used during the examination, it will be injected into the intravenous (IV) line after an initial series of scans. Additional series of images will be taken following the injection. After the examination, the IV line will be removed.

What preparation is needed?

Guidelines about eating and drinking before an MRI exam vary with the specific exam and also with the facility. Unless you are told otherwise, you may follow your regular daily routine and take medications as usual.

If a contrast material will be utilized, the technologist may ask if you have any allergies of any kind.

Women should always inform their physician or technologist if there is any possibility that they may be pregnant.

Jewelry and other accessories should be left at home if possible.

If you have recently received an artificial joint, you should check with your physician prior to an MRI. In most cases, an MRI exam is safe for patients with metal implants except when you have:

- 1) Implanted defibrillators or pacemakers
- 2) Ear implants
- 3) Some types of clips used for brain aneurysms

What should I wear?

You may be asked to wear a gown during the exam or you may be allowed to wear your own clothing if it is loose fitting and has no metal fasteners.

How long will the MRI of the breast exam take?

Most MRI exams are painless. The imaging session lasts between 30 minutes and one hour and the total examination is usually completed within an hour and a half.

What can I expect after the exam?

You may return to your normal activities following the exam.

When will my physician get the results?

One of our radiologists will study the exam images and send a written report to your physician within two business days.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/cfm?PG=breastmr>