

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Exam

The MRI scanner uses a powerful magnetic field, radio waves, and computers to create detailed images of the body and can do so in any direction. MRI does not use x-rays (ionizing radiation), so repeat scans are not a concern.

Almost anyone can have an MRI scan. There are some exceptions as the magnetic field can affect some physical conditions or the working of certain medical devices.

An MRI **cannot** be done if you have/are:

- a standard pacemaker (only select models are compatible)
- external or abandoned pacing wires or automated internal cardiac defibrillator (AICD)
- a spinal cord implant or deep brain implant
- in your first trimester of pregnancy.

It is important for other types of implants to be investigated so that only the MRI compatible versions are allowed into the strong magnetic field. To ensure **all** your implants or devices are compatible, tell your doctor the type, make, and model of any implanted device so that the information is sent to the MRI Department for review.

Categories of implants that must be investigated for MR compatibility:

- aneurysm clip
- coronary (heart) / vascular (blood vessel) stent
- vascular (blood vessel) coil
- prosthetic heart valve
- spinal canal (intrathecal) drug delivery pump
- tissue expander
- inner ear implant
- eye lens implant (cataract surgery)

Preparation

You are generally able to eat and drink as normal, including taking any prescribed medications. If not, you are given instructions at the time you receive your appointment details. Talk to your doctor about medication to be taken just before your scan if you suffer from:

- pain while laying flat or still
- anxiety / panic attacks
- claustrophobia (fear of being in small spaces)

Do not drive for 24 hours if you have taken sedation medication - you must arrange a ride home.

What I Should Wear

A hospital gown, pants, and housecoat is provided. In certain cases, you may wear your own clothing as long they are metal free. Remove all metal items, including watches and jewelry. Lockers are available to secure your belongings.

Note: Body piercings **must be** removed before coming to the hospital if they need special tools for removal.

Bring

- health card
- implant card(s)
- x-rays, if requested by our booking clerks
- list of current medications
- replacement medication dermal (skin) patch
- reading glasses and hearing aids, as required
- someone to drive you home if you are taking sedation medication



What to Expect

When you arrive at the MRI Unit you are given a safety checklist form to complete. This form is more detailed than the one you filled out with your doctor. This form is reviewed with you by an MRI technologist or MRI nurse to ensure you are safe to have an MRI scan. They explain the MRI exam and answer questions about the procedure. Bring a support person with you if you need help answering questions about your medical history.

An MRI technologist positions you on the cushioned imaging table and moves you into position in the MRI scanner. The scanner is a tunnel about 6 feet long and is always open at both ends - a true tunnel. The area of your body that needs to be imaged must be in the center of this tunnel. You are given hearing protection to wear because the scanner is very noisy when it is taking pictures. The exam consists of several sets of these noise sessions.

You are alone in the scan room during your exam. The technologist is in contact with you through an intercom and speaks to you in between the noisy imaging sessions. The technologist can see you at all times through a window in the scan room. You have an emergency call device if you need to speak to the technologist immediately or in case of an emergency. **It is important to remain still and relaxed during the entire exam time.**

On the Day of the MRI Scan

Report to the Regina General Hospital System Wide Admission and Discharge Department (SWADD) [Admitting] **45 minutes** before your appointment.

Note: If you cannot make your appointment, call the MRI Unit of the Medical Imaging Department at least 24 hours before your appointment time at (306) 766 4891.

Remember: Missed appointments create a longer wait time for everyone. Call your doctor's office if you have questions.

Scans can take from 20 minutes up to 2 hours or more. You are given an expected duration when you are brought into the MRI Unit. Although we try to keep appointment times, we do not know before an exam begins exactly how long it takes to complete - everyone is built differently. As a result, sometimes appointment times may be slightly delayed and we appreciate your understanding if this should happen to you.

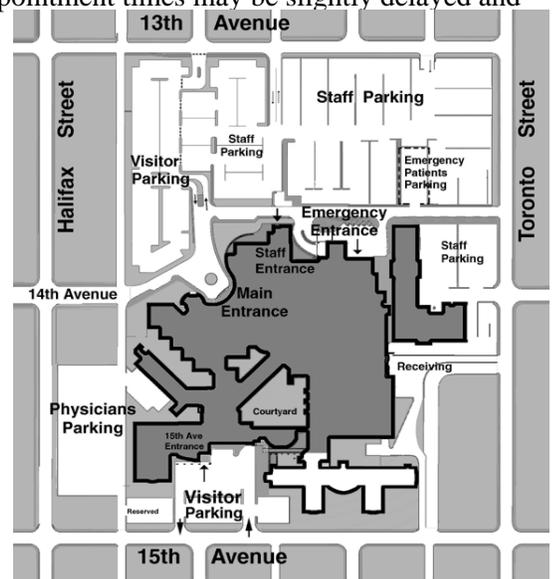
Emergency cases take priority.

After Your MRI

There are no after effects from your scan. Unless you have had sedation medication, you can resume all your usual activities (e.g. driving) immediately after your MRI exam. Call your referring doctor in five to ten business days for the results. Staff are not permitted to discuss the results of your exam with you.

Regina General Hospital Parking Map

Visitor parking lots are located off of 14th Avenue and 15th Avenue. Parking rates are posted on the entrance kiosks.



Hospital Site Map
Regina General Hospital

