

mri tip sheet:

parent/caregiver guide

"MRI" stands for Magnetic Resonance Imaging. An MRI uses special magnets to take detailed pictures of a specific area inside of your child's body.

It is a large, circular, "donut" shaped camera with a tunnel going through both sides that will scan pictures of your child's specific body part/s.

MRI scans help doctors look closer at what is going on with a specific area of your child's body. There are a variety of reasons your child may need an MRI. You can say to your child: "The doctor needs to take pictures of (specific body part) to help see what might be making you feel bad, hurt, etc. and he/she wants to find a way to help you feel better."

What happens the day of your child's MRI?

- You and your child will arrive at the Radiology Department and check-in in the waiting room. You and your child will then meet with the MRI technician. Before going to the MRI scanner, your child will be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- During the scan, your child will lie on a special bed that moves in and out of what looks like a donut, spaceship or a tunnel. Please note: The MRI machine will never touch or hurt your child.
- Your child's most important job during the MRI is to remain still so the pictures are clear. The MRI will last anywhere from 30-90 minutes. Each set of pictures takes a different amount of time. If your child is unable to lie still, staff will discuss other options to help them through this procedure.
- The MRI machine makes repetitive, loud noises that sound similar to a jackhammer, motorcycle or a construction site. Your child will wear ear plugs and noise-cancelling headphones that our staff will provide. There is a music selection available on Youtube or you may bring a CD with you from home.
- If your child is getting an MRI with contrast, the staff nurse will help give your child an IV catheter before their MRI. This requires a small poke on your child's hand or arm before placing the IV catheter straw. There are pain management strategies such as numbing cream and lidocaine that can be offered to your child as well as distraction and comfort techniques. Please call our child life team for further information at 847-570-2831.
- To promote your child's comfort our staff allows for one parent/caregiver to be present during the MRI. Although, if you are pregnant/breastfeeding or have metal in your body you may not be allowed to be with them, for your safety. Check with the radiology team before your child's scheduled MRI procedure.

Helpful Tips to Prepare for your Child's MRI:

- You may have a small wait time prior to your child's MRI. You are welcome to bring their favorite toy for distraction in preparation for long wait times.
- Your child can bring a favorite comfort item (stuffed animal, blanket) with them to have during their MRI.
- If you are in the room with them you may wear normal clothing. Although, some common things that are not allowed in the room are clothing with zippers, bobby pins, eyeglasses, electronics, glitter/rhinestones, metal buttons, belts, watches, and anything else that has metal on it.
- Showing your child what the MRI scanner looks and sounds like will help prepare your child for the day of their MRI. It is best to answer your child's questions honestly and concisely. [Please refer to our MRI prep book and video to help prepare your child for his/her upcoming MRI.](#)

mri picture board

