

MRI Scanning

Information for patients

Department of Clinical Neurosciences



DCN Imaging Department

Ground Floor
Department of Clinical Neurosciences
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EH16 4TJ

Telephone: **0131 312 0857**

What is MRI and how does it work?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a technique using a large magnet, radio waves, and a computer to obtain images of the body. It does not use any form of X-rays and although stronger than the earth's magnetic field, it is considered to be completely safe.

What happens before my scan?

Not everyone is suitable for MRI so the Radiographer will review your safety questions with you to ensure you are safe to enter the scan room. As the MR scanner uses a very strong magnet, you **MUST** let us know if you have a cardiac pacemaker, artificial heart valve, a history of previous brain surgery, cochlear implants, or if you have a history of metal in your eyes.

You may need to have an injection of MR contrast in your arm during your scan. If so, the Radiographer will ask if you have any allergies or any known problems with your kidney function.

What preparation will be needed?

Please complete the blue screening form before your appointment and contact the department if you have answered 'Yes' to any of the first 6 questions or if you weigh more than 20 stone.

You will be asked to remove all objects such as watches, certain jewellery, keys, coins, credit cards, hairgrips, etc. (A locker will be provided). You will also be asked to undress and put on a hospital gown/scrubs to ensure that there are no metal zips, buttons, etc. that could affect the image quality.

Please do not wear any makeup. Contact lenses may have to be removed before the scan.

You are strongly advised not to bring any articles of value into the Hospital.

NHS Lothian cannot accept any responsibility for personal effects.

What will the MRI scan involve?

The Radiographer will ask you to lie on the scanning table. A device containing a receiver coil may be placed around the part of the body being examined and you will then be positioned within the magnet. During the scan you will feel nothing but you will hear the scanner working. The scanner is very noisy and you will be given headphones or earplugs to wear. For some scans, we can play music through the headphones.

The radiographer can see you throughout the scan and can talk to you through a two-way intercom.

It is very important that you keep still during the scan to produce good quality images. You will be given a buzzer to squeeze which sounds an alarm if you feel uncomfortable at any time. You will be monitored by the Radiographer at all times.

How long will the scan take?

Most scans take between 20 – 60 minutes depending on which part of the body is being scanned. You will be informed what to expect before the scan.

What happens after the scan?

Once your scan is complete and the images have been checked you will be told you are free to leave the department.

How will I get my results?

General Practitioner Referral: The result should be available for your GP to view in around 10 – 14 days. Please contact your GP to receive your results

Out Patient Referral: The result should be available for the doctor or consultant who requested the scan to view in around 10-14 days. He/she will be in contact with you to discuss the results or to arrange a follow-up appointment

The results are not available directly from the MRI department.

Keeping your appointment

If you cannot keep your appointment, or have been given one that is unsuitable, please change it by phoning the number on your appointment letter. Your call will give someone else the chance to be seen and will help us keep waiting times to a minimum.

Public transport and travel information

Bus details available from:

Lothian Buses on 0131 555 6363 or www.lothianbuses.co.uk

Traveline Scotland on 08712 002 233 or
www.travelinescotland.com

Train details available from:

National Rail Enquiries on 03457 484 950 or
www.nationalrail.co.uk

Patient transport

Patient Transport will only be made available if you have a medical or clinical need. Telephone **0300 123 1236** (calls charged at local rate) up to 28 days in advance to book, making sure you have your CHI Number available.

A text relay service is available if you are hard of hearing or speech impaired. They can be contacted on: **18001-0300 123 1236** (calls charged at local rate).

To cancel patient transport, you should telephone 0800 389 1333 (Freephone 24 hour answer service).

What should I do now?	✓
Check your appointment time and date are suitable (please take care to check if your appointment is in the morning or in the evening – some scanning lists start early and finish late in the evening)	
Complete the Blue MR Safety Screening Form and bring it with you	
There are several MRI scanners located on the Edinburgh BioQuarter site. Please check your appointment letter to ensure you attend the correct department. The MRI scanners in the DCN Imaging Department are located on the ground floor within the Department of Clinical Neurosciences building (DCN). The closest Car Park is Car Park 1B	

If you have internet access you may find the following websites helpful for their description of common radiology examinations:

www.radiologyinfo.org

www.asnr.org/patientinfo

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