

When will I get my results?

A radiologist or cardiologist (specialist doctors) will look at your scan and send a report to the doctor who referred you. You should hear within 1-4 weeks when they want to see you next, unless a follow up appointment has already been made.

How do I find the MRI department?

The MRI department is located in the basement of the Tower Block at the Royal Cornwall Hospital.

Contact us

If you have any questions or need to check whether the scan is suitable for you, please contact us:

Tel: 01872252290

Email: rch-tr.clinicalimaging@nhs.net

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690



Cardiac MRI



Your doctor has asked us to perform an MRI examination of your heart to see how well it is working. As part of your MRI examination we will need to monitor your heart via ECG and give you an injection of MRI contrast.

You must arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time so we can prepare you for the scan. If you are late we may not be able to scan you.

What is MRI?

MRI stands for magnetic resonance imaging. It is a way of taking images of your body using a combination of a powerful magnetic field and radio waves. No X-rays are involved.

Is it suitable for everyone?

Sometimes an MRI scan is not an appropriate test. Please let the department know as soon as possible if you:

- have a pacemaker
- have ever had a pacemaker
- have an implanted electronic device
- have ever had an implanted electronic device
- have had operations on your brain or heart
- have sustained any injuries to your eyes involving metal fragments
- are pregnant
- think you may be pregnant.

Are there any alternatives?

Nuclear medicine and echocardiography (ultrasound) can answer some of the questions MRI does. You should discuss this with the doctor that requested the MRI in the first instance.

What will happen if I don't have this test?

Your doctor may find it more difficult to diagnose the cause of your symptoms.

How do I prepare for the scan?

Please avoid wearing clothing with any metal fastenings.

What will happen?

Please arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time.

On arrival you will be asked to complete a checklist. It is very important that you complete this accurately.

You will be asked to remove all jewellery, empty your pockets and we may need to ask you to change into a hospital gown. Sticky tabs will be placed on your chest for the ECG leads. We may need to shave off some body hair so they stick properly. A small plastic tube (cannula) will be placed in a vein in your arm or hand ready for the injection of gadolinium (MRI contrast dye). This is usually administered halfway through the scan. When the scanner is ready you will be shown in and asked to lie flat on the scanner table. During the scan you will be asked a number of times to hold your breath for between 10 and 15 seconds.

Please let the department know if you have ever had an allergic reaction to MRI contrast before.

How long will it take?

This test usually takes about 1 hour.

Are there any side effects?

- Some people start to feel warm during the scan. Please let us know if you get too hot.
- A small number of patients experience brief nausea following the injection of the MRI contrast.

Are there any risks?

MRI is safe as long as you complete the MRI safety checklist first. Although the MRI contrast is considered to be safe there is a very small risk you will have an allergic reaction to it.