

MRI enterography



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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, but no X-rays.

What is MRI enterography?

Your doctor has asked us to perform an MRI examination of your small bowel to help find the cause of your symptoms. As part of your MRI examination we will ask you to drink a special liquid called Mannitol, which will help us to get better pictures. Mannitol is a slightly sweet tasting liquid that will fill your small bowel and show up on your MRI scans.

Please arrive on your appointment time. If you arrive late for this appointment we may not be able to perform the scan as the special liquid can take 30-40 minutes to get to the right part of your bowel.

For this examination it may be necessary to give you:

- a drug that relaxes the muscles of your small bowel
- MRI contrast (a special dye) which will improve the quality of the scan images.

Both of these drugs will be given through a cannula (small flexible plastic tube) placed in your arm.

Can anyone have an MRI scan?

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
- sustained any injuries to your eyes involving metal fragments
- are pregnant
- think you may be pregnant.

Are there any alternatives?

The small bowel can be imaged in different ways. The alternatives involve drinking a liquid that makes the bowel visible on X-ray images or CT scan images. Alternatively, the liquid can be given through a tube passed through the nose, stomach and into the upper part of the small bowel.

The small bowel can also be imaged using Capsule Endoscopy. This involves swallowing a capsule that contains a small camera which records pictures taken of the inside of the small bowel.

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 **do not have anything to eat** for six hours prior to your scan. You may drink some fluids to keep hydrated and to take any prescribed medication you need. Please wear clothing with no metal fastenings.

What will happen?

1. On arrival you will be asked to complete an MRI checklist. It is very important that you complete this accurately.
2. You will be asked to remove all jewellery and empty your pockets of everything and we may need to ask you to change into a hospital gown.
3. You will then be given the liquid to drink. We will ask you to drink between one and two litres.
4. It is important to drink as much as you can to get the best possible images. You should expect to feel very full.
5. After about 30 minutes we will escort you into the MRI room and take some pictures to see if the liquid is in the correct area of your bowel. Sometimes more time and/or liquid is needed before the test can be completed.

6. Once the liquid is in the correct area we will proceed to perform the scan. Depending on the type of scan the doctors have asked for we may place a cannula into a vein in your arm or hand. We will then administer one or two of the following drugs during the procedure:
- Buscopan reduces movement of your small bowel and helps to improve image quality. Please tell the radiographer if you have a condition called Glaucoma (raised pressure in the eye) or any heart problems such as angina or irregular heart beat.
 - Gadolinium is an MRI contrast (dye) and helps to improve the quality of the scan images.

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

How long will it take?

The time from starting to drink the liquid until completion of the test is usually about one hour. Please allow up to two hours as the drink may take longer to travel to the correct area of your bowel.

Are there any side effects?

Expect to have some loose bowel motions for a time after consuming the drink. It will be similar to having diarrhoea, so make sure that you have access to a toilet that is close by for some time following your test.

Some patients experience increased flatulence, abdominal cramps and nausea after consuming the drink.

If you are given an injection of Buscopan you may experience blurred vision for a while, but this should soon pass.

Other important information

If possible please ask somebody to drive you to and from the hospital for this examination.

Are there any risks?

MRI is a safe examination as long as you complete the MRI safety checklist.

There is an extremely small risk that the injection of Buscopan may have a delayed effect on the eye, causing pain and blurred vision. It is important to seek urgent medical advice if this occurs. Blurring of vision after the injection may occur but should soon pass.

Although the drink and injections given as part of this test are considered to be very safe there is a small risk that you may have an allergic reaction to them.

When will I get the results?

A radiologist will look at your images and write a report which will be sent 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 dept?

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

Contact us

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact us:

Tel: 01872 252290

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

