



MRI: Pelvic Scan with Bowel Prep

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains what an MRI scan is, how to prepare for your scan, what to expect during your appointment, and how to get your results.

What is an MRI scan?

MRI stands for *magnetic resonance imaging*. MRI uses a powerful magnetic field, radio frequency pulses, and a computer to produce detailed pictures of organs, soft tissues (muscles and nerves), bones, and other internal body parts. MRI will help your healthcare provider decide which treatment is best for your health condition.

MRI Screening

If you have any metal on or in your body, an MRI can harm you.

The strong MRI magnet will pull on certain metals or implants. We also need to know certain things about your health.

To prevent a delay or cancellation of your exam, please ensure your team coordinator and MRI department are aware if you have any of the following:

- Pacemaker or defibrillator
- Cerebral (brain) aneurysm clip
- Cochlear implant
- Prosthetic hip or other metal in your pelvis
- Implanted or external drug pump (including chemotherapy)
- Breast tissue expander
- Bullet or shrapnel in your body
- Neurostimulator
- Dialysis or renal failure
- Allergy to gadolinium
- Tattoos placed within 6 weeks of your MRI appointment

How do I prepare?

- Please talk with your referring provider if you have any concerns about managing pain or anxiety during your MRI scan.
- Your exam may require medication to slow the movement of your bowel. The medication will depend on your exam, health history, and whether you will be driving home after your scan.
- To maximize our medication options, ensure you do not operate a vehicle for four hours following your exam. Arranging for someone to drive you to and from your appointment, taking the bus, or walking are all acceptable forms of transportation.
- **You'll receive an alternative or no medication if you will be driving after your scan.**
- Women: Tell your provider if you are pregnant, or if there is any chance you could be pregnant.
- If your scan is in the morning:
 - The evening before your scan, have a light dinner, such as eggs or a sandwich. Do not eat breakfast on the morning of your scan.
- If your scan is in the afternoon:
 - On the morning of your scan, have a light breakfast, such as an egg and toast, or cereal. Do not eat lunch.

On the Day of Your Scan

- Starting 4 hours before your scan time:
 - Do not eat any solid food.
 - It is OK to drink liquids that do not contain caffeine, milk, or chocolate up to 1 hour before your scan.
- Starting 1 hour before your scan time:
 - Do not eat or drink anything.

What can I expect the day of my pelvic MRI?

- You will be asked to fill out an "MRI Patient Screening Form." This form asks a series of questions about your health and medical devices.

- You may receive medication to slow your bowel before your exam begins. Slowing down your bowel helps us get a clearer picture of your pelvis. The medicine will be given as a pill or through an injection.
 - Diabetic patients are limited to pill medication only. Please ensure you will not operate a vehicle for four hours following your exam.
- You will lie on a sliding table. The technician will help you get into position and then leave the room to take the images.
- You will be able to talk with the technician through an intercom.
- The scan usually takes 20 to 45 minutes.
- Sometimes, an injection of contrast is used to make certain tissues or blood vessels easier to see. You may feel discomfort or coolness at the injection site.
- You may feel warmth in the area where the images are taken. This is normal. If it bothers you, please tell the MRI technician.
- You will hear loud tapping or knocking noises during the scan. We will provide earplugs and headphones with music to help block some of these sounds.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

- A radiologist skilled in MRI will review and interpret your MRI images. The radiologist will not talk with you about the results, but will send a report to your primary care or referring provider. This provider will give you the results.
- You and your provider will then decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.
- You may also read your results on your MyChart page. Results are typically available within 1 to 2 business days.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- Harborview Imaging Services: 206.744.3105
- SCCA Imaging Services: 206.606.1434
- UWMC - Montlake Imaging Services: 206.598.6200
- UWMC - Northwest Imaging Services: 206.598.6200