

## Our service

This leaflet aims to give you information and answer any questions you may have about your child's MRI scan. It explains a bit about MRI, what to expect at the hospital and any care your child needs following their scan.

Your child will **not** be sedated for this examination at QVH.

## What is an MRI scan?

An MRI scan uses a combination of a strong magnet and radio waves to produce detailed images of the inside of your child's body. The MRI scanner is a very noisy tunnel that your child will have to lie in for their scan. The area being scanned has to be in the middle of the machine but your child will be able to see you in the room and you can hold their hand throughout their scan.

MRI scans show areas of the body differently to x-rays and can produce more detailed pictures of the body particularly of the organs and soft tissues.

MRI scans can take a long time with most scans taking between 20-60 minutes however this depends on the area of the body being scanned.

## Is MRI suitable for everyone?

MRI is relatively safe. However some implants placed during surgical procedures are not safe to go into an MRI scanner. This will be checked by our expert staff (called Radiographers) to ensure the safety of both you and your child.

Depending on the age of your child a parent/guardian may need to remain in the scanning room throughout the scan with them. Both you and your child will need

to complete a safety questionnaire that will be checked by our staff to ensure your safety.

Please note if you are pregnant or suspect you may be pregnant you will not be allowed to accompany your child into the room, you will need to make other arrangements. If there is no other adult available we will have to defer your child's scan.

## How should I prepare my child for their scan?

Your child can eat and drink as normal and take any normal medication. Any additional preparation will be included in the appointment letter.

An MRI scan can appear scary but talking and explaining things to your child can help alleviate these worries. If your child has not had an MRI scan before you can call the department to arrange a convenient time to bring your child to visit the unit so they know what to expect when they come for their appointment.

It is important to stay still during an MRI scan. Games such as 'musical statues' or 'sleeping lions' can help your child practice at staying still.

There are multiple apps that showcase MRI scans that are aimed at children. A list of recommended apps can be found in the FAQs.

## Will they need an injection?

Some patients may require an injection of MRI contrast. This will give more information on the images to aid diagnosis. The injection will be given through a cannula that will be placed in your child's arm. Depending on the age of your child this will either be done in MRI or on our children's ward. Instructions will be provided with

the appointment letter. A numbing cream can be arranged for your child if required. Please inform us before their appointment so we can arrange this.

Side effects are very rare however some patients may experience nausea, or a rash.

## Preparing for their scan

For the scan your child will need to be dressed in clothing with no metal. Small pieces of metal stitched to your child's clothing such as metal studs, buttons or zips are not a problem, unless we are scanning that area at which point we will provide a gown to change into.

Any loose items must be removed from both your child and the parent/guardian accompanying them into the room. This includes but is not limited to coins, keys, wallet, phone, belt, and any credit/debit cards. You will be provided with a locker to put all your belongings in.

Before you or your child enter the room the MRI staff will go through a safety questionnaire with you both to ensure you have no implants or devices in your bodies which may be a hazard.

## During their scan

The radiographer will position your child on the scanner table and move the table so that the area being scanned is in the middle of the machine. It is possible your child's head will be inside the tunnel. It is important your child stays very still during the scan otherwise the pictures will come out blurred.

They will be given an alarm buzzer for emergency use to alert the radiographers.

## Your child is having a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan

Information for families



## Contact details

Should you have any further questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Radiology Department**  
**Tel: 01342 414249**

---

If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH, please visit [www.supportqvh.org](http://www.supportqvh.org)



---

Please ask if you  
would like this leaflet  
in larger print or a  
different format.

Radiology services

Issue 2 – Ref: no. 0376

Approved by the QVH Patient Information Group

Print Feb 2024 – Review Feb 2027

© Copyright QVH NHS Foundation Trust

[qvh.nhs.uk](http://qvh.nhs.uk)

The machine makes a lot of knocking and banging noises. Both your child and the parent/guardian accompanying them will be given earplugs and headphones to wear. Your child will hear us talk to them through the headphones. We can also play music through the headphones.

## After their scan

After your child's scan is finished you are both free to leave the hospital. If your child has had an injection their cannula will be removed. It is important your child keeps well hydrated after the injection to help their kidneys flush it out of their body.

Results should be back with your child's GP/consultant approximately 2 weeks after your scan. Please allow this time before booking a follow up appointment.

## Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Is it possible for my child to see the scanner before their appointment?

Yes. You can call the radiology department and we will arrange a mutually agreeable time/date for you to visit the unit.

We also have play specialists on site that we can arrange your child to meet with before their scan. Please contact us to arrange this.

## Recommended apps/resources:

- MRI Scan Experience by Siemens (our scanner will look similar as we have a Siemens scanner)
- Virtual Reality MRI – this app walks through the MRI procedure with the eyes of a child
- Youtube – search 'MRI Scanner Sounds'