Scheduling An Appointment

To schedule an appointment at any of our five imaging locations, please call:

**Stanford Radiology Scheduling Center**
Phone: 650-723-6855  Fax: 650-723-6036
Appointments are available Monday thru Saturday.

For information on:
Magnetic Resonance Imaging-MRI, Patient Prep Instructions or Maps & Directions, go to: [http://Stanfordhospital.org/MRI](http://Stanfordhospital.org/MRI)
What is a MRI Scan?
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
A magnetic resonance (REZ-oh-nans) imaging scan is usually called an MRI. An MRI does not use radiation (X-rays) and is a noninvasive medical test or examination. The MRI machine uses a large magnet and a computer to take pictures of the inside of your body. Each picture or “slice” shows only a few layers of body tissue at a time. The pictures can then be examined on a computer monitor. Pictures taken this way may help caregivers find and see problems in your body more easily. The scan usually takes between 15 to 90 minutes. Including the scan, the total examination time usually takes between 1.5 to 3 hours.

What Will Happen during the MRI Examination?
A closed MRI machine is large and looks like a hollow, cylinder-shaped tube surrounded by a circular magnet. You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and to remove all jewelry, earrings, piercings, or other metal objects. Caregivers will help you lie on a moveable examination table that slides into the center of the magnet. The body part being tested may be kept in place with a cradle or straps to hold it very still. Your caregiver will sit behind a window during the MRI scan; however, your caregiver will be able to see, hear, and speak with you at all times.

You must lie very still during the scan. If you move, the MRI scan pictures may not be clear. Your primary care physician may order you a mild sedative if you are claustrophobic (afraid of closed spaces), have a hard time staying still, or have chronic pain. You will hear very loud banging noises during the series of scans. The noise is caused by the magnets moving. You will be given earplugs or ear muffs to help soften the noise of the MRI machine.

Some MRI examinations require the administration of intravenous contrast material to help your body part show up better in the pictures. The contrast material is put through an intravenous line (IV) started in a vein in your hand or arm.

How Should I Prepare for My MRI Exam?
You should inform your caregiver if you have food allergies, drug allergies, hay fever, hives, or allergic asthma. Your caregiver should also know if you have any serious health problems, and what surgeries you have undergone. Women should always inform their physician or technologist if there is any possibility they are pregnant. We will not perform an MRI on a patient during the first trimester (the first 3 months) of pregnancy. If you are breastfeeding at the time of the examination, you should ask your technologist how to proceed.

You should not have an MRI if you have anything in your body that a magnet attracts. Items that may interfere with your having an MRI include:
- Aneurysm clips
- Artificial or prosthetic limbs or joints, such as an artificial knee joint
- Bullets or pieces of shrapnel
- Cochlear (ear) implants
- Heart pacemaker
- Implanted cardiac defibrillator
- Implanted IV ports
- Implanted spinal stimulator
- Insulin pump
- Certain intrauterine devices or “IUDs”
- Pieces of metal fragments in your eyes from welding
- Medication patch: A medication patch is also called a “transdermal” or “skin” patch. Some medication patches may have metal in or on them. Examples of medication patches are nicotine, birth control, and nitroglycerin patches.
- Some metal pins, plates, screws, or surgical staples: In most cases, these things will not cause a problem with an MRI.

CHECK IN: Please arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment and allow 1.5 to 3 hours for the exam process.

PREP INSTRUCTIONS: For Patient Prep Instructions, go to: http://Stanfordhospital.org/MRI

BREAST SCAN: Please schedule within 7-12 days of your menstrual cycle. If the request is urgent, this preparation will not be required.

CREATININE BLOOD TEST: This is required within 30 days prior to the MRI examination for the following people:
- Patients who are age 60 years or older
- Patients who are diabetic (insulin and non-insulin dependent types)
- Patients who have a history of kidney insufficiency/kidney masses/single kidney

EATING: If you are getting intravenous contrast material, which helps your body part show up better in the MRI pictures, or sedative (SED-ah-tiv) medicine during the examination, you may be asked to not eat solid food for 4 to 8 hours before the examination.

METAL: Do not wear any jewelry including rings, earrings, necklaces, or watches. Take off any clothing that has metal hooks, buttons, zippers, or other metal items on it.