MRI Scan

MR (Magnetic Resonance) imaging provides excellent clarity of images of soft tissues, including muscles, brain, nerves, the spinal cord, ligaments and tendons. It is commonly used to assess back, knee and other joint injuries, but is also used for identifying tumours and lesions in the brain, organs and within bones.

An MRI machine uses a strong magnetic field to alter alignment of protons in the body. Alignment is altered by radio waves to create a picture of the internal structures. Unlike xrays or CT, there is no radiation associated with MRI.

What will I experience?

The MRI unit consists of a bed which slides inside a long tube and it is open at both ends. The magnets need to be close to the body to be effective, so the tube is quite narrow. Patients having knee or ankle scans generally enter feet first, otherwise the head and trunk are within the machine during imaging. Some claustrophobic patients find this uncomfortable, so you are advised to talk to your GP if you have this condition.

You will be asked to stay still during each imaging set, during which the machine makes a loud tapping noise. Mirrored glasses are available so that the patient can see out beyond their toes and we provide headphones so you can listen to our music or some of your own. Most procedures take 30 – 45 minutes.

Safety considerations

MRI is a safe and non-invasive procedure, but there are precautions that need to be taken. The magnet is very strong and always on, so it is important that no metal enters the room. You will leave all personal belongings and piercings outside and we recommend leaving these at home if possible. You will also complete a comprehensive questionnaire to determine if you have any metal or mechanisms within your body which could be affected by the field. Please consider the answers carefully.

Fees

Medicare have different rules for MRI than other imaging equipment. Currently they only provide rebates for a limited number of designated machines and limit these mostly to specialist referrals. AS GMI has purchased a new MRI unit, there is no Medicare rebate. You are required to pay at the time of service, however we are committed to keeping out of pocket costs low.

If you have any questions, please speak with our reception team by phoning 5249 4646.