

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Information for Parents and Carers: Having an MRI scan under Oral Sedation



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The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with further information regarding your child's MRI scan which is being performed under oral sedation.

What is an MRI scan?

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) creates high resolution images of the body on a computer using a powerful magnet and radio frequency waves. MRI is a very safe way of producing images that can diagnose medical conditions and produces more detailed pictures than an ordinary x-ray. It does not use x-rays and has not been shown to have any harmful side effects. The scan is carried out by radiographers specially trained in MRI.

The MRI scanner is an open ended tube. Your child will lie on a bed which then slides into the tube, with the part of the body which we are scanning at the centre. The scan should be completely painless.

Why does my child need to have sedation?

MRI scans can take anything from 15 minutes up to an hour or slightly longer in some cases. This is due to the level of detail that the MRI provides and requires the patient to lie very still for the duration of the scan. Some children can find this very difficult either because of their age or medical condition. In these cases it may be necessary for them to be given some oral sedation to help them be still in order to obtain the best quality scan.

The decision to perform the scan in this way will be discussed with you by the referring Doctor and is made on an individual basis.

What happens on the day of the scan?

You will need to bring your child to Ward 10 on the date and time stated on your appointment letter. This letter will also provide important information about when your child will need to stop eating and drinking.

Once booked into Ward 10, a member of the nursing team will greet you and ask some questions about your child's medical history. They will also check their temperature, pulse rate and blood pressure.

They can wear their own pyjamas/clothes (no metal zips/buttons) and bring a favourite toy or comforter. This can remain with them during the scan, providing it has no metal or mechanical parts.

In **some** cases, a colourless contrast agent may need to be given as part of the MRI scan. This provides more detailed images and is given via an injection through a cannula (a small plastic tube) into your child's hand/arm. If required, this will be discussed with you on the ward and a topical cream will be applied to your child's hands/arms by the nurse. This works by numbing the skin to reduce the pain/discomfort your child may feel as the cannula is inserted. If required the cannula will be put in while your child is on the ward prior to the scan.

They will also discuss the oral sedation and answer any questions you may have. A consent form will need to be completed with you before the sedation can be administered. The ward will contact the MRI department to ensure that they are running on time and your child will then be given the sedation 30-60 minutes prior to their scan time.

Once the sedation has been given, your child will be closely monitored by the nursing team. A hospital porter will then collect you and your child and will bring you to the MRI department, accompanied by a nurse from ward 10.

Once in the MRI department, a member of the MRI team will discuss the scan with you and will need to check your child's MRI safety questionnaire. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

Once your child is asleep, we will transfer them into the scanner. The nurse from the day ward will accompany them. If it is safe for you to do so you may be invited to accompany your child during the scan, or we may ask you to wait close by in the waiting area.

What happens during the scan?

Once inside the scanner, your child will be closely monitored by the nurse and the radiographer who will be carrying out the scan. The scanner is very noisy, so even though your child is asleep they will be given ear defenders for hearing protection during the scan.

What happens after the scan?

Once the scan is completed, your child will be brought out of the scanner and into the adjacent bed area. A member of the MRI team will bring you to this area.

When ready, a hospital porter will collect you and your child and take you back to the Ward 10 to continue recovery. Once your child is awake and they have eaten and had a drink, they should be able to return home the same day.

Once they have been discharged, they will need to be closely supervised for the rest of the day. They may be unsteady and uncoordinated and unable to carry out their usual activities. The nurses will discuss this with you prior to discharge.

The MRI images are studied by a specially trained radiologist and a report will be sent along to the doctor who referred your child for their scan. The referring doctor will contact you with the results or discuss them with you at the next follow-up appointment.

Further information

Please complete the enclosed safety questionnaire for your child prior to your appointment. If you have any queries, please contact the CT/MRI appointments office. If the appointment is inconvenient, please contact the CT/MRI appointments office as soon as possible.

If you have any further questions please telephone the hospital on any of the numbers below:

CT/MRI Appointments Office: 01493 453260 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am – 5pm)

Ward 10 Childrens Ward: 01493 452010 (available 24 hours a day)

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

