



Spine Institute of Arizona

MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI)

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The MRI is a special imaging test to evaluate the neurologic structures (i.e. nerve roots and spinal cord), bones and discs in your spine. Each study consists of several exams and may take as long as 60 minutes. During the exam, you will be required to lie flat and still on a table. The table enters a small tube where the images are performed. The magnet used to take the images is loud and you may be supplied with earphones for your comfort. The inside of the MRI is well lighted, ventilated and equipped with two-way communication with the technologist. No adverse or ill effects have been reported from the use of the magnetic fields during this procedure. Although most patients do not experience this reaction, it is entirely normal if you feel warm and begin to perspire.

A small number of patients who suffer from claustrophobia (fear of closed spaces) may tend to feel "closed in" by the shape of the apparatus and the noise that is produced. The MRI is open at both ends, ventilated, well lit and there is an intercom system to help prevent this feeling. The technologist will remain in voice contact with you and if you begin to feel ill or anxious, please let the technologist know so that he or she can help you make the procedure more comfortable. You may have someone with you during the examination or request medication for any feelings of anxiety.

Certain metallic objects within the body may be adversely affected by the induced electromagnetic fields created by the MRI imaging. Patients with certain conditions may have serious adverse medical effects from MRI imaging. Patients with the following conditions must not have an MRI scan: (1) cardiac pacemaker/defibrillator, (2) certain heart valve prosthesis, (3) brain surgery with placement of aneurysm clips, (4) eye surgery with placement of metallic sutures, (5) pregnant women, (6) inner ear implants, (7) bio and neuro stimulators. If you have had previous eye, brain, or spinal surgery, you should inform the radiologist or technologist prior to this examination.