

# Having a Cardiac MRI Scan

Information for patients



Your doctor has referred you for a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan of your heart. This leaflet tells you about what happens before, during and after your scan.

## What is a cardiac MRI scan?

MRI is a safe test that uses magnets, radio waves and a computer to make detailed pictures of your heart and major blood vessels.

The scan creates both still and moving pictures of your heart, to look at its structure and how it is working.

The doctors use these pictures to help them decide the best way to treat people who have heart problems.

## What happens before the scan?

You will be asked to fill out a screening form before your scan. The form will ask you if you have any medical objects or medical devices (like a pacemaker) in your body.

Some devices are safe in the MRI machine but some are not.

If you have any implanted devices please telephone the Oxford Centre for Clinical Magnetic Resonance department:

Tel: **01865 221 172**

(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.00pm)

Or:

Tel: **01865 234 597**

(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm)

When you arrive for your appointment, you will be asked to change into a gown for the test; it is helpful if you remove all jewellery before arriving for your scan. You are welcome to bring a dressing gown and slippers, to wear when you have changed into your hospital gown and are waiting to be transferred into the MRI.

## What happens during the scan?

A cardiac MRI scan usually takes between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on how many pictures are needed.

You will be asked to lie on your back on a sliding table that goes into the open-ended scanner. Cardiac MRI is painless and harmless but can be quite noisy. We will ask you to wear headphones and can play you the radio, or you can bring your own music on a CD or iPod.

You will need to lie very still during the test because any movement can blur the images. The doctor or radiographer will talk to you through the headphones and ask you to hold your breath for 6-10 seconds at a time, while the pictures are taken.

The doctor or radiographer will control the scanner from the next room and can see you through a glass window.

Sometimes we will give you a small injection of dye into a vein in your arm as part of the scan. This dye helps to show up the muscle of your heart.

## What happens after the scan?

You will be able to leave and return to your normal routine after the scan has finished.

The results of your test will be sent to the doctor who referred you (normally your hospital consultant), usually within 5 working days. If you do not already have a follow-up appointment, your consultant will contact you when they get the results.

## How to contact us

If you need to contact us or would like any further information please call or email us:

Tel: **01865 221 172** or **01865 234 597**

Email: **[www.ocmr@ox.ac.uk](mailto:www.ocmr@ox.ac.uk)**

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **[PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk)**

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