

Pelvis MRI Basics

MRI uses a magnetic field, radio waves and a computer to create detailed image slices (cross sections) of the pelvis. This allows you to evaluate different types of body tissue in the area, as well as distinguish normal, healthy tissue from diseased tissue.

The guest patient must empty the bladder two hours before the exam and not void again until the exam is complete. If guest patients are claustrophobic (fearful of small, enclosed areas) or experience pain when lying on the back for more than 30 minutes, the doctor or Imaging Center may prescribe a relaxant or pain medication.

For this exam, the guest patient will lay on the table feet first with arms rested comfortably. Coils (special devices to improve image quality) may be placed on or around the pelvic area of the body. The scanning table slides into the magnet, covering the lower body. During the scan, guest patients do not feel anything, but they hear intermittent humming, thumping, clicking and knocking sounds. Earplugs or music are provided to help mask the noise.

In some cases, the radiologist will request an injection of a contrast agent (dye) which will enhance arteries and enable the radiologist to interpret the areas in question. Before the exam, guest patients must inform the technologist, radiology nurse and/or physician if they have allergies, are pregnant or are nursing. Guest patients may eat and drink before the exam. The contrast agent is injected into a vein in the arm, which may cause a cool sensation. As images are taken, the guest patient must hold very still, and in some cases, hold their breath. The technologist is always able to see and hear the guest patient during the approximately 45 – 60 minute exam.

