



ANESTHESIA & SEDATION

Your child is having an MRI scan under general anesthetic

This page explains about having an MRI scan under general anesthetic, and what to expect when your child comes to have this procedure.

An MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan uses a magnetic field rather than x-rays to take pictures of your child's body. The MRI scanner is a hollow machine with a tube running horizontally through its middle. Some children find it difficult to lie still for the scan – either because of their age or their medical condition – so we might suggest they have the MRI scan under general anesthetic.

Watch our short video about having an MRI scan or listen to our audio podcast. If you would like further advice about preparing your child for the scan, please ring the department's play specialist on the numbers below.

We assess all children to see if they might benefit from having the scan under anesthetic. Your appointment letter will state whether your child is having an anesthetic so you can follow the instructions below to prepare them.

ARE THERE ANY ALTERNATIVES?

Your child may need this scan so that their doctors can get detailed pictures of the size and shape of part of your child's body. Various types of scan such as CT, ultrasound and x-rays can show the size and shape of parts of your child's body but not in as much detail as an MRI scan. The information from the scan is then used to help with a diagnosis and plan their treatment.

Preparing for the general anesthetic

When the anesthetist is satisfied that your condition is stable, you are taken into the operating theatre. Throughout your anesthetic and operation, the theatre staff look after you and treat you with care and dignity.

On the day of the scan

Your child will be admitted to a day admission unit where they will be seen by a doctor or nurse specialist and be prepared for anesthesia.

We will also ask you to give permission for the MRI scan under general anesthetic by signing a consent form if this has not been done previously. The anesthetist will decide the order of the list on the day itself. This will be based on the clinical diagnosis and condition of all the children placed on that list.

Your child should wear clothes without zips or metal poppers for the scan – otherwise they will need to change into a gown.

Before the scan starts, the nurse or radiographer will check your child does not have a pacemaker, metal implants or clips, dental braces, a history of metal fragments in the eyes or any

allergies. We will ask you to sign a form to confirm this.

If your daughter is 12 years old or older, we will ask her about her periods and any possibility she could be pregnant.

WHAT DOES THE SCAN INVOLVE?

Your child will either have an anesthetic gas to breathe or an injection. The anesthetist will closely monitor your child's blood pressure, pulse, temperature and breathing throughout the scan, ensuring that they are safe and fully asleep. Once your child is under anesthesia, we will ask you to wait in the waiting area until the scan is completed.

Your child will need to lie on the bed for the scan. Depending on the part of their body being scanned, they may need to have a coil over part of their body or wear a head coil (this will not touch their head). When your child is in the correct position, the radiographer will move the bed inside the scanner and then go into the control room. The anesthetist will monitor your child throughout the scan.

When the scan has finished, the radiographer will move the bed out of the scanner. They will then move your child into the recovery area to wake up from the anesthesia. We will call you back at this point so that you can be with them when they start to wake up. You should be prepared to stay in the hospital until your child is fully awake and has had something to eat and drink. You will be able to go home a couple of hours or so after the scan.

Medicines given during an MRI scan

We may give your child some medicine or contrast during the MRI scan to make the image clearer. The radiographer will tell you which medicines your child has had in case of later side effects.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS?

There are no risks associated with MRI scans. They are painless and generally quick with no lasting effects. The scanner does not touch your child during the scan. MRI scans are not suitable for people with certain metal implants inside them (such as pacemakers) because the scanner emits a strong magnetic field. This is why we carry out a thorough metal check before your child has the scan.

Every anesthesia carries a risk of complications, but this is very small. Your child's anesthetist is a very experienced doctor who is trained to deal with any complications.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTERWARDS?

When your child has recovered fully from the anesthesia and has had something to eat and drink, you will be able to go



home. The radiologist (doctor specializing in scans) will send a report of the scan to your child's doctor in time for their next appointment. If you have not been given a follow-up appointment to see your consultant, please contact us on 80077.

When you get home

- After the anesthesia, your child may feel sick for 24 hours. You should encourage your child to drink but do not force them to do so. As long as your child is drinking, it does not matter if they do not feel like eating for the first couple of days.
- Children are generally sleepier than usual for 24 hours after a scan under anesthesia. This is because the effects of the anesthetic medicine last for about a day.
- If your child is unduly sleepy or difficult to rouse, make sure they are in a safe position on their side and get in touch with Emergency Services (calling 112 or 998).
- Keep a close watch on your child until they are back to normal. Do not leave them with an inexperienced carer.
- Your child may be tired and a little clumsy for 24 hours after the anesthesia, so do not let them do anything that might lead to a fall.
- You should keep your child away from school or nursery for one day until they have recovered from the anesthesia.
- Your child may have mood changes which can make him or her irritable. This is temporary.
- If your child is taking any medications, please give this as normal.

More information: if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mubadala Health on: 800 77