

Having an MRI scan

You have been referred for an MRI scan by the Audiology Department. This leaflet explains what it entails and why you need it.

Why do I need an MRI?

It is routine in the Audiology Department to offer an MRI scan to some patients if their symptoms and test results indicate it may be necessary. You may be offered a scan:

- (a) When there is a significant difference in hearing between your right and left ear and/ or you have noises in one or your ears (tinnitus).
- (b) Your hearing has changed significantly over a certain time period.
- (c) Your balance function testing results are unusual.



What is the purpose of the scan?

The aim of a scan is to take a closer look at the anatomy of your inner ear and the structures attached, to see if there are any benign conditions which might account for the differences between ears. This means they may require only regular monitoring by the ENT team, although very occasionally further management is required'

What happens during an MRI scan?

You will normally have your MRI scan around 8 weeks after you are referred for the test. The scanner itself is a large magnet that uses magnetic fields to take pictures of the areas of interest. For a scan of the inner ear (and brain), the scanner usually encircles your head and upper body. You will need to be quite still during the course of the scan. In most cases it will last approximately 15-20 minutes and it will take place in the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. More information on the scan process will be sent to you by the scanning department.

Before we send you for an MRI scan

As a precaution and in order to assess if it is safe to carry out the MRI, you should let us

know if you have any of the following:

- Cardiac pacemaker or Implanted cardiac defibrillators
- Shunts
- Heart Valves
- Cochlear implants
- Neurostimulators
- Other electronic, magnetic or mechanical implants
- Metal fragments in the eye
- History of heart or brain surgery
- Aneurysm clips
- Infusion pumps
- Other metallic implants; surgical clips and/or shrapnel and metal foreign bodies
- Claustrophobia

What happens after the scan?

The radiologist (scan expert) will view and report on your scan results. This will be reviewed, by the Audiology team and by the ENT team where required. A letter will be written explaining the results and a copy of this will be sent to your GP. **This process from scan to receipt of letter can take about 3-4 weeks.**

If you have any further questions, please contact:

Audiology Dept: 0118 322 7238

MRI department: 0118 322 7944

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
London Road
Reading RG1 5AN
0118 322 5111 (switchboard)

For further information about the Trust, visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

If you would like this leaflet in other languages or formats (e.g. large print, Braille or audio), please contact the Audiology department.

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Audiology Department

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