



**Wrightington, Wigan and  
Leigh Teaching Hospitals**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# MRI Small Bowel Imaging

# Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Small Bowel Imaging

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## Patient Information

### Radiology Department

The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link: <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

**Author ID:** LW Rad 025

**Version:** 4

**Leaflet title:** MRI Small Bowel Imaging

**Last review:** June 2024

**Expiry Date:** June 2026

## Introduction

If the information within this leaflet does not answer your questions, please contact the Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Suite where a member of staff will be pleased to help you:

**Telephone:** 01942 778675. Monday to Friday 8:30am until 5pm.

Please pay attention to your appointment letter. Your scan may be performed at either Wigan Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, or Leigh Infirmary. If you attend the wrong site, you will likely be turned away without a scan.

## Medical History Considerations

If you have had any of the following, we may have to defer your scan until we gather more information about your medical history:

- Heart Pacemaker, Loop Recorder, Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD)
- Artificial Heart Valve
- Intra-cranial vessel clips/coils
- A possibility of pregnancy
- Metal splinters/fragments in eyes or body
- Gastric Band
- Internal electronic devices

Please contact MRI appointments on receipt of your appointment on 01942 778675 if any of the above apply to you.

## What is an MRI scanner?

An MRI scanner is a complex imaging machine containing a large open-ended tube. It is used to help diagnose disease and injury. An MRI Radiographer will perform your scan.

## How does it work?

MRI uses powerful magnets and radio waves to align protons in the body. Each proton produces a signal which is read by a receiver. This information is converted using complex computer technology to create detailed pictures of the inside of your body.

## What does the scanner look like? Is it safe?

MRI scanners use powerful magnetic fields and therefore do not use x-rays. They are safe for most people. However, some people with certain magnetic or electronic objects in or on them cannot be scanned.

## Why do I need an MRI Small Bowel?

Small Bowel imaging helps to evaluate, or rule out, pathologies such as Crohn's and Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD). An MRI Small Bowel scan is a type of scan specific to the small bowel. Your consultant will have considered other imaging options, and your scan will be reviewed by a specialist Radiologist.

The scanner produces detailed pictures of your body in a cross section, rather like cutting a tree to view its rings. It can create images from front to back, top to bottom and side to side.

# How long does a scan take?

An average scan takes around 20 minutes. You will need to answer some safety questions, drink some preparation (Klean Prep, Moviprep, Lactulose or Mannitol) for up to 1 hour before your scan and change into a gown. Plan to be with us for up to 3 hours in total. We may have to accommodate emergency cases that will need to be scanned out of turn. This may mean you have to wait a little longer than anticipated. Please allow for extra time on your parking ticket.

## Before your scan

You should not eat anything for 6 hours before your scan; medications can be taken with sips of water. If you are diabetic, you should not eat anything for 4 hours before your scan. On your arrival to the department, you will be asked some questions to make sure it is safe to scan you.

You will be given a litre of preparation to drink in the department. This drink helps to highlight the bowel. In some cases, you may be asked to drink extra preparation in order to achieve good quality imaging. Some patients may experience a laxative effect from the preparation – the toilets will be shown to you before you start drinking. If you have a stoma, please bring extra bags as they will fill quickly.

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown, take off any jewellery and lock any valuables, electronic devices, or metal objects in a secure locker.

## During your scan

You will enter the scanner feet first. Most patients will be asked to lie on their front for the scan. If you do not think you can manage this please speak to the Radiographer, they will help to make you as comfortable as possible. Lying on your front helps to reduce the natural movement of the stomach caused when breathing, which creates better images.

You will need to lie very still throughout the scan. If you move it may be necessary to repeat a section of the scan, this means you will be in the scanner longer. The scans may require you to hold your breath for a few seconds. MRI scans can be noisy (repetitive knocking sounds). You will be given headphones or earplugs to reduce the noise of the scanner to an acceptable level. It is possible to play music to you if you wish. Most patients listen to the local radio station.

You will be given a contact buzzer in case you feel you need to speak to the Radiographer during your scan or to stop the scan for any reason.

## Will I need an injection?

Yes, MRI small bowel imaging requires administration of two injections in order to provide clearer pictures. This will give the Radiologist extra information in order to provide a full and comprehensive report on your scan. A cannula (small needle) will be inserted into a vein in the arm or hand before the scan. The first is a muscle relaxant (Buscopan) used to settle bowel movement obscuring the area of interest. The second is an MRI contrast dye (Gadolinium) which highlights the blood supply to the organs. There are no major adverse side effects – however you may be required to stay in the department for up to 30 minutes after the injection.

## After your scan

The Radiologist will need to study your scans carefully to make the diagnosis. They will produce a written report of their findings, which will be sent to the consultant who referred you for the scan.

## Are there any side effects?

There are no known adverse side effects from a clinical MRI. You can continue to take any medication as normal. Patients who receive the injection of Buscopan may experience blurred vision, dry mouth, or tachycardia (faster heart rate). These should settle after the scan is finished. In rare cases, Buscopan can aggravate undiagnosed glaucoma, causing red, itchy eyes. If this occurs within the 48 hours after the scan you are advised to seek urgent medical attention.

## Is it claustrophobic?

You will be required to lie in the centre of the scanner (magnet). It is open ended and brightly lit. About 1% of patients may feel claustrophobic during their scan. However, the Radiographers are there to put you at ease, making you as comfortable as possible.

## Relatives and Escorts

You can bring a relative or friend with you to the Radiology Department. However, they will not normally be allowed in the examination room. Please speak to a Radiographer if you have any concerns. If required, please speak to a member of staff beforehand.

## Children/Vulnerable Adults

Please be aware that the department does not have the facilities to supervise children/vulnerable adults. If you need to bring a child or vulnerable adult with you, you must bring an appropriate adult to supervise them whilst you are having the examination.

## Interpreters

If you require an interpreter, please contact the department before your appointment so that this can be arranged. **(Please Note: Hospital policy states that relatives cannot act as interpreters).**

## What if I am unable to attend?

The average missed outpatient appointment costs the NHS £160. If you cannot attend your appointment, please contact the MRI Suite **Telephone:** 01942 778675 so that we can offer your appointment to somebody else. We will be glad to offer you an alternative appointment and will try our best to accommodate you at a date and time suitable to you. Please allow plenty of time to park your car. If you are running late, please let us know.

## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

**Contact Us:** Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager  
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary  
Wigan Lane  
Wigan WN1 2NN

# Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?

## Decision-Making Support

1. **What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?**
2. **How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?**

## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see the patient information leaflet, Ref. Corp 006 *How we use your information*. This can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover. This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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Call 111 first when it's less urgent than 999.

Phone: 0808 802 1212

Text: 81212

[www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)



Version number: **1.0**  
Last modified date: **03rd July 2026**

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