

Breast MRI

Guidelines & Information

Who should have a Breast MRI?

Breast MRI is used to screen women who have:

- A mutated BRCA1 or BRCA2 breast cancer gene
- A first-degree relative (parent, sibling, child) with a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation
- An increased lifetime risk of developing breast cancer
- Had radiation to the chest between the ages of 10 and 30
- Any rare genetic diseases that increase their risk for breast cancer

MRI is also used to:

- Look at abnormalities found during mammography, physical exam or ultrasound as recommended by the radiologist
- Look at breast implants and the tissues around them if there is a medical concern
- Look at the breasts of women who are newly diagnosed with breast cancer before surgery
- Check on the effectiveness of chemotherapy for some women being treated for breast cancer
- See the difference between scar tissue and a recurrent tumor after breast cancer surgery

How often should I get a Breast MRI?

Women at high-risk should have a screening MRI along with a mammogram once a year.

Annual breast screening is recommended for women who:

- Have a mutated BRCA1 or BRCA2 breast cancer gene
- Have a first degree relative (parent, sibling, child) with a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation
- Have a lifetime risk of breast cancer that has been scored at 20-25 percent or greater based on one of several accepted risk assessment tools that look at family history and other factors
- Had radiation to the chest between the ages of 10 and 30
- Have Li-Fraumeni syndrome, Cowden syndrome or Bannayan-Fily-Rubalcaba syndrome or may be at risk of having one of these based on a history in a first-degree relative

Why do I need an injection for Breast MRI?

Breast MRI is done using a contrast material called gadolinium, which is injected into the arm through an IV partway through the exam. The contrast agent is a very safe substance that will move into the bloodstream and highlight the blood flow to any abnormal tissues. When contrast is used, the MRI can show:

- Breast abnormalities
- Difference between benign (noncancerous) and malignant (cancerous) lumps
- Size and location of a suspicious lump
- Enlarged lymph nodes in the chest and underarm area

How much will my Breast MRI cost?

The price of your Breast MRI will depend on your insurance coverage. Our patient financial services team can provide you with a price estimate in advance of your exam if you provide them with your insurance information. They can be reached Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at 207.795.2237.

Preparing for your Breast MRI

Try to schedule your exam between days seven to fourteen of your menstrual cycle. The technologist will be able to get the best pictures during this time. Please plan on arriving at least one half-hour before your scheduled appointment to allow time for insurance paperwork and patient screening with an MRI technologist.

A few things can ensure your safety and comfort in the MRI environment:

- You will be asked to change into comfortable clothes for your exam to ensure they are metal free
- When possible, leave jewelry and other valuables at home

Remove any patch medications or any external mechanical devices, or let us know if you've been instructed not to for medical reasons.

Safety information

While MRI is extremely safe, because of the magnetic strength of the machine, certain patients with metal in their bodies or implants cannot be scanned. If you have a device, implant or condition listed below, it may interfere with your MRI; please contact us immediately.

- Have a cardiac pacemaker
- Have a prosthetic heart valve
- Have a surgical clip, bone or joint replacement, or any metallic implant
- Have any external mechanical devices
- Have suffered a shrapnel wound
- Have any metallic chips or splinters in the eye
- Are pregnant, or think you might be
- Weigh more than 300 pounds
- Suffer from claustrophobia



During the MRI exam

Once in the exam room, you will lie face down in the magnet for the duration of your exam. An IV will be inserted into your hand or arm by a specially trained technologist, and it will be used to inject contrast material called gadolinium. The contrast is a very safe substance that will move into the bloodstream and highlight the blood flow to any abnormal tissues; this will be injected into the IV partway through the exam. You will be in constant communication with your technologist throughout the entire exam.

As the MRI scanner obtains each series of images, you will hear persistent buzzing and thumping noises, but at no time should you experience any physical sensation or discomfort. You may wear earplugs or listen to music during your exam if you wish.

During the exam, all you have to do is lie still and follow the technologist's instructions. MRI is very sensitive to motion. Even the slightest movement can distort the image and limit its diagnostic value. It is important for you to remain as still as possible during your scan.

Most MRI exams last 20-40 minutes, although some can last up to an hour. After your MRI, you may return home or to work.

Obtaining your exam results

All MRI images are interpreted by a radiologist, a doctor who specializes in reading MRI. Within the next few days, the radiologist will contact your physician with the results of your study. Your physician is the only person authorized to discuss your results with you.



What is Breast MRI?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) systems allow medical professionals to “see” the inside of the body with outstanding clarity. Breast MRI is a tool for evaluating breast problems, and it can be used in addition to mammography in certain cases.

Mammography uses low-dose X-rays to look at the breasts, while MRI takes pictures using a very powerful magnet and radio waves. An MRI scan involves no surgery, no radiation, no hospitalization and has no known side effects.



confidence
trust

choice
empowerment

Shields offers Breast MRI services at fourteen locations throughout Massachusetts:

- Brighton
- Brockton
- Dartmouth
- Greenfield
- Hyannis
- Leominster
- Lowell
- Marlborough
- New Bedford
- Palmer
- Springfield
- Weymouth
- Woburn
- Worcester

800.258.4674
shields.com



APPOINTMENT

We look forward to seeing you for your appointment. You are scheduled for an MRI scan at

Date: _____

Time: _____ a.m. p.m.

Need to reschedule?

If you need to reschedule your visit, please call our scheduling department at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment at 1.800.258.4674.

Billing questions?

Contact our Patient Financial Services team at 207.795.2237.

