

Patient Information Leaflet

Instructions for the parent/guardian of children undergoing an MRI scan under sedation.

Radiology department (including Dolphin ward day admission)

Introduction

We hope this guide will answer your questions about your child's MRI scan with sedation. Please contact the team if you require further information via the details at the end of this leaflet.

What is an MRI scan?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a large tube which is open at both ends. It uses a strong magnetic field and radio waves to produce detailed pictures of the inside of your body. Using a computer this information is converted into a picture.

MRI scanners use powerful magnetic fields and metal items can distort MRI images and may be a safety hazard if they become attracted to the magnetic field.

Why does my child need to have an MRI scan and what is the need for sedation?

Your child will have an MRI scan as it will help the doctor to decide on the cause of your child's symptoms. This procedure/examination will give clearer information to the specialists treating your child, without causing any side effects or discomfort to them.

MRI scans are often lengthy procedures which will require the patient to remain still for approximately 20 minutes, so sedation enables the MRI team to obtain diagnostic images with minimal movement from your child.

What are the risks of this scan?

MRI facilities have strict safety and screening procedures in place.

At present no conclusive evidence that exposure to the magnetic field of the MRI scanner poses any risk or side-effects.

Will my child need an injection?

An MRI sometimes requires an injection of a special dye (contrast media) into a vein in the arm or hand via a cannula, and it is eliminated from the body through the kidneys. This is administered to patients at the request of a radiologist (a specialist radiology doctor) to help enhance certain areas of your body.

Occasionally this may cause an extravasation, which is a swelling around the injection site on the arm, where some of the contrast media has seeped into the tissues. Allergic reactions to contrast medium are possible, but rare, and can usually be treated immediately.

Our radiology staff are trained to deal with these complications if they arise.

Preparing for your child's procedure

It is essential that you complete the safety questionnaire as soon as you receive it (on behalf of your child) and then again for yourself or the adult that is accompanying your child on the day.

Please contact the MRI department if you have answered **yes** to **any** of the questions. This will avoid any complications or delays in your child's treatment.

If the accompanying person is contraindicated for MRI (e.g. electronic implants, recent surgery or pregnant) you may wish to consider bringing someone else along to accompany your child into the scanning room.

Please contact the booking team before your appointment if:

- you plan on using hospital transport or your child needs a hoist to transfer
- if you require an interpreter – please inform us as soon as you receive your appointment letter, and we will arrange an interpreter for you.

The day of the procedure

On the morning of your child's appointment, please could you contact Dolphin ward on 01279 827173 to check bed availability at 7am.

If you cannot get through please keep trying as there is no answerphone service.

Please keep your child nil by mouth before attending Dolphin ward.

This includes;

- **6hrs for solids and milk (including formula)**
- **4hrs for breast milk**
- **2hrs for water**

Try not to dress your child in clothing that has any metal, zips or poppers as any jewellery or metal your child has on, must be removed before the sedation is given. This is so we do not disturb your child once they have been sedated.

Can a parent/ guardian/ next of kin stay with the child for the MRI scan?

Parents/ guardians/ next of kin are welcome to attend the appointment, but only one person will be allowed to enter the MRI scanning room with the child. A safety questionnaire will have to be completed for this person also.

What happens when we arrive on Dolphin ward?

When you arrive on Dolphin ward you will be greeted by a staff nurse who will introduce themselves, admit your child to the ward and allocate them a bed bay. They are also there to answer any questions you may have.

Your child will first be weighed and a set of observations taken (e.g. temperature and pulse rate). A doctor will then assess your child to make sure they are fit and well enough to have the sedation. If your child is unwell on the day the scan may be postponed.

Once the initial checks are complete, an oral medication will be given to your child to sedate them. The time it takes for children to fall asleep varies. On average this can take 15-60 minutes.

When your child is asleep the nurses will inform the MRI department, and the porters will be organised to collect your child from the ward to take you to the scanning department.



Medication

Unless directed by your consultant please continue to give your child all medications as usual prior to their MRI scan.

Getting to us

The Princess Alexandra Hospital (Hamstel Road, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1QX) follow the signage to Dolphin Ward, which is located on the first floor, green zone.

When should I arrive?

You should take your child directly to Dolphin ward for sedation at the given appointment time. A notification through text or letter should have been sent to you to confirm this appointment.

You do not need to go to the MRI department first.

When you reach Dolphin ward please press the call bell at the door (on the right-hand side on the wall) as the staff will need to let you in.

This is where you will be then taken to a specific bay/area where your child will have the sedation prior to the MRI scan.

What happens when you arrive in the MRI department

When your child reaches the MRI department, the radiographer (the person who operates the MRI scanner) will check through the safety questionnaires for both you and your child and explain the procedure to you and answer any questions you may have.

Before entering the scan room, you will be both asked to remove any loose objects/ items and make sure your pockets are empty.

This includes items such as watches, jewellery, hairpins, keys, coins and mobile phones. You should also remove any wigs and hearing aids you are wearing.

Secure lockers are provided for your valuables.

The MRI procedure

An MRI scanner is a large tube which is open at both ends. Your child will be positioned on the scanning table and the radiographers will try to make your child as comfortable as possible.

You and your child will be given ear protection to wear during the scan, as MRI scanners make a series of loud noises. This noise is due to the small magnets in the machines being turned on and off.

A 'receiving device' maybe placed around the part of the body being examined and the scanning table is then moved into the scanner.

An MRI scan is painless and the exam typically takes 15 to 60 minutes.

A nurse from Dolphin ward will accompany you and your child into the scanning room and a monitor will be attached to your child's finger or toe to monitor their pulse and oxygen levels throughout the scan.

You and the nurse will also be shown a call button which should only be pressed if you need to stop the scan.

After the procedure?

After the MRI scan is complete the porters will be informed and they will take you back to Dolphin ward, where you will remain until your child wakes up. The time it takes to wake up can vary from patient to patient.

Once your child is awake and alert they can then have something to eat and drink. You may wish to bring your own snacks but the ward can provide a meal. You will be given a menu on arrival to select your choice.

Food will only be provided for your child but feel free to bring food in for yourself.

When your child is fully awake a discharge summary will be provided summarising your child's stay. Once this is done you can go home.

When do we get the results?

You will not know the results of your examination immediately. The radiologist will report their findings to the clinician who arranged your procedure, who will discuss the results with you. It usually takes a couple of weeks for the results to become available.

What is a recall and why may my child need one?

A recall is when the radiologist has looked at your previous images from your scan and would like further images to aid diagnosis. We may therefore, need to send your child a further appointment to attend the MRI department.

Please do not be concerned, as radiologists cannot always be present to view and check the images at the time of your child's initial scan.

Contacting the team

If you have any further questions about your MRI scan or an existing appointment, please contact the radiology department (**Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm**) on; **01279 827179** and press option 1 for radiology appointments and then option 3 for MRI.

Dolphin ward telephone number: - 01279 827173

Your feedback matters

If you would like to give feedback on your care, please contact our patient experience team on paht.pals@nhs.net or 01279 827211.

Please contact the communications team on paht.communications@nhs.net if you would like this leaflet in another language or format.

