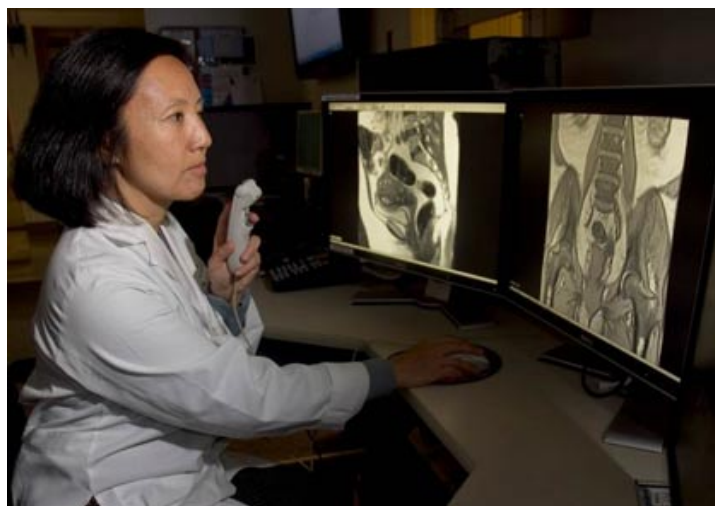




MRI Safety During Pregnancy

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

If you become ill during pregnancy, both you and your unborn child become patients. Before treatment, your doctor must determine your medical needs and health conditions that could be affecting you and your baby. Your doctor may want to order a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) exam for you.



Why do you need an MRI?

Your doctor may order an MRI if you have symptoms that require treatment or exam results that need clarification but cannot wait until after the delivery of your baby.

Imaging exams are used to see inside the body and help determine if there is a medical problem. MRI is a widely used type of imaging exam. It uses radio waves and a powerful magnet to produce images. It does not use radiation.

Alternatives to MRI

Ultrasound is the most commonly used imaging exam during pregnancy. It uses sound waves to produce images. However, if ultrasound does not provide a clear answer, or if other parts of your body need to be imaged, an MRI exam may be needed to obtain the information your doctor needs.

Computed tomography (CT) exams may be performed safely during pregnancy. However, because CT uses x-ray radiation, ultrasound or MRI is preferred.

MRI risks during pregnancy

There are no proven risks to pregnant women or unborn babies from MRI exams. Over the last 30 years, thousands of pregnant women have had MRI exams, and no known harmful effects to the baby have been found.

You should not refuse an MRI exam necessary for diagnosing your potentially serious or urgent illness because of fear of the exam. The most important factor in having a healthy baby is ensuring a healthy mother. The baby depends on the mother to stay well and carry her pregnancy to term.

Contrast material

For some MRI exams, a contrast material called gadolinium will need to be injected into a vein in the arm.

While contrast material sometimes improves the MRI images, it is not normally used during pregnancy. Contrast material will only be used for the exam if it is necessary to answer your doctor's questions. A radiologist (a doctor with expertise in medical imaging) will be consulted before the procedure to ensure the contrast is necessary.

MRI during pregnancy

An illness is not pleasant, and a significant illness during pregnancy can be especially serious. However, the baby depends on the mother to stay healthy and to carry her pregnancy to term. If helping the mother become better means performing an MRI exam, then it will benefit the baby's health as well.

Disclaimer

This information is copied from the RadiologyInfo Web site (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org>) which is dedicated to providing the highest quality information. To ensure that, each section is reviewed by a physician with expertise in the area presented. All information contained in the Web site is further reviewed by an ACR (American College of Radiology) - RSNA (Radiological Society of North America) committee, comprising physicians with expertise in several radiologic areas.

However, it is not possible to assure that this Web site contains complete, up-to-date information on any particular subject. Therefore, ACR and RSNA make no representations or warranties about the suitability of this information for use for any particular purpose. All information is provided "as is" without express or implied warranty.

Please visit the RadiologyInfo Web site at <http://www.radiologyinfo.org> to view or download the latest information.

Note: Images may be shown for illustrative purposes. Do not attempt to draw conclusions or make diagnoses by comparing these images to other medical images, particularly your own. Only qualified physicians should interpret images; the radiologist is the physician expert trained in medical imaging.

Copyright

This material is copyrighted by either the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA), 820 Jorie Boulevard, Oak Brook, IL 60523-2251 or the American College of Radiology (ACR), 1891 Preston White Drive, Reston, VA

20191-4397. Commercial reproduction or multiple distribution by any traditional or electronically based reproduction/publication method is prohibited.

Copyright © 2019 Radiological Society of North America, Inc.