

MRI for parents or carers of patients with a cochlear implant



Your child has been referred for an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scan. As your child has a cochlear implant, we need to check whether they can safely get an MRI scan.

What is an MRI scan?

MRI stands for Magnetic Resonance Imaging which is a scan that uses a powerful magnet to obtain images of your child's body.

Does your child need an MRI?

We check with a doctor whether the MRI scan is needed. If the doctor thinks the benefit of your child getting a MRI scan outweighs the risks then we recommend the MRI scan goes ahead, following all the recommended precautions. However, you have the right to refuse an MRI scan for your child.

Are cochlear implants safe for MRI?

Cochlear implants and auditory brainstem implants contain a magnet to attach the external part of the device to the internal part. These magnets will be pulled towards the powerful magnet in the scanner.

Most of these are safe for MRI but we may need to take extra precautions to make sure it is as safe as possible. For example, some cochlear implants require a special bandage to be applied. We need to do some preparation before your child attends their MRI appointment to allow us to make sure we can perform the MRI safely.

Do I need to do anything to prepare for the MRI?

No, there is nothing you need to do to prepare for the MRI.

Will it be painful?

Some patients with cochlear implants experience discomfort or pain during their MRI scan. The sensation is sometimes described like a thumb pressing firmly on the skin but the level of discomfort varies from patient to patient. We will give your child an alarm to press if they need to stop the scan at any time.

Is there anything we can do to prevent it from hurting?

We will follow all the guidance from the cochlear implant manufacturer to make it as safe as possible. Keeping your child's head still when in the MRI scanning room will minimise the likelihood of discomfort.

Are there any other effects?

Some patients report that they hear sounds that are not real due to the effect of the MRI on the cochlear implant, but these should stop after the MRI is finished.

Will my child be able to wear their external processor?

No, it is unsafe to bring this into the MRI scanning room and should be removed before the MRI scan. Please note we will remove it as close to the MRI scan as possible as your child will not be able to hear once we remove the external processor.

Will my child's cochlear implant still work properly after the MRI?

We will check your child's implant is working properly after the MRI scan and if there is any issue we recommend you contact the Scottish Cochlear Implant Programme as soon as possible.

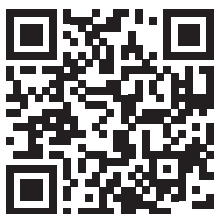
There is a small risk the MRI could move or weaken the implanted magnet meaning the external processor cannot be attached. There is also a small risk that the cochlear implant could be damaged after MRI exposure. In these rare cases, patients have needed surgery after an MRI scan to correct this.

We will give you a letter after your child's MRI scan with contact details if you have any concerns about their cochlear implant after you leave the hospital.

What if my child has any other implants?

If your child has an implant for both ears then we will bandage their head on both sides. Everything else will remain the same.

We will ask you to complete a safety questionnaire before your child's MRI scan, please fill this in carefully. Please contact the MRI Department before your child's appointment if your child has any other implants.



Any other questions?

Please ask a member of staff.

Contact Centre Telephone Number

0141 347 8379

www.nhsggc.org.uk