

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Feed and Swaddle for Babies



Your child has been referred to our service for an MRI exam. We have found that it is not always necessary to sedate young babies (0-3 months old) to keep them still. We instead use a technique called “feed and swaddle.” After a feed, it is a natural time for most infants to fall asleep. We therefore ask that prior to your infant’s scan you feed him/her. Then, we will swaddle your infant in a blanket with the aim of making them sleepy. You may stay with your infant throughout the scan as long as you have completed a safety assessment prior to entering the MRI suite.

What to expect on the day of my appointment?

Try to keep your baby awake on the journey to hospital so that is easier for them to fall asleep at the time of their scan. We also advise keeping them a bit hungry and due for a feed just before their appointment. Please bring a feed for your baby if you are using formula milk.

1. Upon arrival you will be asked to complete metal safety questionnaire for you and your infant. You will be asked to leave any metallic objects like jewelry, watches, keys, and cellphones in a locker outside the scanner room.
2. Infant is changed into a hospital gown and any medication patches and monitors are removed at this time.

3. We will ask you to feed your infant 30-45 minutes prior to MRI scan time and change diaper immediately after feeding.
4. Swaddle infant while maintaining a quiet environment until infant falls asleep in a quiet room. When your infant is in a deep sleep we will transfer them into the MRI scanner.
5. Continue to MRI suite to have exam performed and ear plugs will be placed by a nurse or technologist prior to the beginning of exam.

How long will it take?

The scan time depends on the type of body part being imaged. The average scan time ranges from 45-60 minutes. It is also dependent upon how still the infant remains as movement will result in repeat imaging. If the patient is unsuccessful in completing the exam, a staff member will assist with rescheduling the patient with anesthesia.

For more information regarding the use of anesthesia for radiology procedures visit [texaschildrens.org/departments/radiology-sedation](https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/radiology-sedation).