

MRI Lymphangiogram

What is an MRI Lymphangiogram?

MRI stands for Magnetic Resonance Imaging. The MRI machine uses a large magnet to take pictures of the inside of your child's body. MRI does NOT use radiation.

A magnetic resonance lymphangiogram is an exam that takes pictures of the body's lymphatic system. The lymphatic system is like a delivery system for the body, getting rid of waste products, delivering fluid, nutrients and cells that fight illnesses.

Why is this exam performed?

This exam is done to see if there are any leaks in the lymphatic system. It will take pictures of how the lymphatic system works throughout the body.

What to expect

Because MRI uses a powerful magnet to create images, we must follow a strict safety process. To make sure your child is safe, we will ask you to answer a list of safety questions and will use a hand-held metal detector. If your child does not require medication to sleep (sedation) for the exam, one parent or guardian may be with your child in the MRI suite. You will be asked to complete the same screening process as your child. It may be helpful to plan for other siblings. For safety reasons, you will not be permitted to accompany your child if you are pregnant.

Preparing your child is key to the success of this study. To help prepare your child, our Child Life Specialists will help ease your child's fear and anxiety. Please let a staff member know if you are interested in a Child Life consultation at no additional cost.

Success for an MRI exam depends on a child's ability to lie still inside the MRI tunnel. The machine makes different types of noises as it takes pictures.

The MRI preparation video found on this page may be helpful in preparing your child:

<https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/mri-magnetic-resonance-imaging>

This exam requires needles to be inserted into the feet or into the groin area. A contrast medium is injected through these needles while pictures are taken. Due to the nature of this study, the majority of children require sedation. If you feel that your child will need sedation, please request this at scheduling.

For those children requiring sedation for the test, we will follow the same safety processes outlined above and you will be able to stay with your child until he or she is off to sleep. Any child receiving sedation for the exam can:

- Eat food up to 8 hours before your arrival time.
- Drink milk, formula, and food thickener up to 6 hours before your arrival time.
- Breastfeed or given breast milk up to 4 hours prior to your arrival time.
- Only drink clear liquids up to 1 hour before your arrival time (water, Pedialyte, Sprite, 7-up, or apple juice). Orange juice is not a clear liquid.
- Take prescribed medications with a small sip of water (if needed) prior to arrival time unless otherwise specified.

If these instructions are not followed, the exam may be rescheduled or cancelled due to the risk posed to your child.

You will meet with a Nurse Practitioner and/or the doctor who will be providing the sedation medication. You will have the opportunity to ask questions, discuss risks, and will be asked to sign your consent.

Your child will be asked to change in to a gown for the exam. A technologist will take your child and the accompanying adult to the procedure room where he or she will ask why the study is being done and will explain the exam to your child.

For this 60-90 minute exam:

- An intravenous line, also known as an IV, is required to give the contrast and medications. An IV is a tiny tube that is inserted into a vein. Your child might feel a pinch or poke when it goes in the vein, however we have ways to manage the pain associated with it.
- Your child will be positioned on his or her back on the MRI table. The technologist will place a “coil,” which is a part of the camera, on the area to be imaged. Drapes will be placed over the child to create a sterile field.
- If the needles are to be placed in the groin, the area will be prepped using sterile technique by an Interventional Radiologist or Technologist. The groin area will be cleaned with cotton swabs soaked in a brown iodine-based cleaning agent. This will feel cold to your child, which is normal.
- The needles used to inject the contrast will be inserted.
- Your child will then be taken into the scan room for the pictures to be taken. The Interventional Radiologist will inject contrast while the pictures are being taken.
- For the preparation, sedation, and imaging, you should expect to be in the department approximately 4-6 hours.
- When the procedure is over, you will be given discharge instructions.

If your child received anesthesia

Your child may be sleepy and unsteady from the anesthetic for several hours. Your child may have a red face or be slightly swollen around the face and eyes. This should improve within 24 hours. Your child may wake up feeling hungry. When he or she is wide awake, the recovery nurse will give clear liquids such as Pedialyte, apple juice, Sprite or water. If your child does not throw up during the next 30 minutes, he or she can eat normally.

To prevent accidents, closely monitor him or her for the next 24-48 hours. Walk with your child, holding hands even if he or she seems to walk without trouble. It is also important to help your child in the bathroom.

The sedative and the test may disrupt your child’s routine. You may notice a change in behavior for the rest of the day. Some children may become cranky. Some children sleep for hours. Others may stay up late because they slept for the test. Be patient. Things will be back to normal the next day.

When to seek help

Call 911 if your child has difficulty breathing and looks very pale or has blue lips or nails or a very high fever (greater than 103°F).

Call your child’s doctor if your child has any of the following:

- Blood in the urine, pain
- Throws up more than three times
- Seems confused or dizzy the next day, is harder to wake up than usual
- A sore throat that gets worse or does not go away in two days
- A fever of over 101°F for more than 24 hours
- Develops any allergies such as hives, itching or a rash

Receiving your MRI Lymphangiogram results

Call your doctor for a follow up appointment as instructed. You can also call the doctor who ordered the MRI for the results 24 to 48 hours after the test. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to call Radiology Nursing at 832-826-5371.

If you would like a CD of your child’s study, please call the film library at 832-822-1202. The Radiologist’s report will also be included on the CD.

