What is an MRI?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is one of the most technologically advanced diagnostic tools available. MRI uses a powerful magnet, low intensity radio frequency pulses and computer technology to create images of the soft tissues, muscles, nerves and bones in your body. There are no known side effects of MRI and it uses no radiation. In many instances it replaces the need for CT or X-rays, which do utilize radiation to produce images.

Insurance Plans

- Aetna
- Amerigroup/Apple Health-Medicaid
- CHPW/Apple Health-Medicaid
- CIGNA
- Citrine (Breast and Cervical Health)
- Coordinated Care/Apple Health-Medicaid
- Crime Victims
- DSHS-Provider One
- First Choice Health Network
- First Health/Coventry
- Kaiser Health Plan (Commercial/Medicare Advantage)
- Medicare
- PHCS/MultiPlan
- Premera
- Regence
- Regence Medicare Advantage
- Tricare-HealthNet
- United Healthcare Commercial Plans
- United Healthcare Medicare Advantage (Medical Center only)
- USFHP
- Worker’s Compensation

Is your plan not on the list? This doesn’t mean that WhidbeyHealth does not accept your insurance. Please contact our Insurance Advocates at 360.678.7656 ext. 4103 to see if we are an in-network provider for you. You may also contact your insurance company directly to see if you need a referral. Deductibles and coinsurance may be higher for out-of-network insurance.

(For exams performed at partner hospitals call RADIA at 888.927.8023.)
How does MRI work?
The main component of the MRI scanner is a large magnet. This magnet causes your body's hydrogen atoms to align themselves in such a way as to receive radio signals from the magnetic resonance system. When your body receives these signals, it reacts by sending its own radio signals back to the machine. It is this radio-frequency transmitted by your body that is computer-processed and turned into detailed images which are read by radiologists.

Is it safe to have an MRI exam?
For most patients, having an MRI exam is safe and painless. However, because MRI uses a strong magnetic field, some patients may not be able to have this type of exam. Please check the following list carefully and inform your medical provider if you have or have had any of the following:

- Pacemaker
- Aneurysm clips
- Inner ear (cochlear) implants
- Implanted spinal cord stimulator
- Metallic implants
- Metal fragments in one or both eyes

Also, please let the MRI technologist know if you:
- Have dental bridges
- Wear hearing aid(s)
- Have ever been a metal worker
- Are pregnant or think you might be

What can I expect on the day of my exam?
Please plan to be in the imaging center for approximately one hour for your MRI exam.

The MRI technologist will walk you through a series of questions to ensure we have all the pertinent information needed prior to your exam. The technologist will then ask you to change into a gown or scrubs and to remove any metal from your person. We will give you a locker to secure all of your belongings.

The technologist will make you comfortable on the table, provide you with ear plugs or headphones to listen to music, and will then begin the exam. An I.V. will be installed if contrast is required for your exam.

Most MRI exams last between 20 and 40 minutes. After your exam most patients are free to leave the imaging center immediately.

WhidbeyHealth will send a report of your MRI study to your provider within 48 hours.