



QUAKERBRIDGE
RADIOLOGY

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Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA)

What is a Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA)

Angiography is a minimally invasive medical test that helps physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions. Angiography uses one of three imaging technologies and, in some cases, a contrast material to produce pictures of major blood vessels throughout the body.

In magnetic resonance angiography (MRA), a powerful magnetic field, radio waves and a computer produce the detailed images. MR angiography does not use ionizing radiation.

MR angiography may be performed with or without contrast material. If needed, the contrast material is usually injected using a vein in the arm.

MR angiography is used to examine blood vessels in key areas of the body, including the brain, kidneys, pelvis, legs, lungs, heart, neck, and abdomen.

Preparing for an MRA

1. You may be asked to wear a gown during the exam or you may be allowed to wear your own clothing if it is loose-fitting and has no metal fasteners.
2. You may follow your regular daily routine and take medications as usual unless instructed otherwise.
3. The radiologist should also know if you have any serious health problems and what surgeries you have undergone. Some conditions, such as severe kidney or liver disease may prevent you from having an MRI with contrast material.
4. Women should always inform their physician or technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant. MRI has been used for scanning patients since the 1980's with no reports of any ill effects on pregnant women or their babies. However, because the baby will be in a strong magnetic field, pregnant women should not have this exam unless the potential benefit from the MRI is assumed to outweigh the potential risks.
5. If you are breastfeeding at the time of the exam, you should ask your doctor how to proceed. It may help to pump breast milk ahead of time and keep it on hand for use after contrast material has cleared from your body, about 24 hours after the test.
6. If you have claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces) or anxiety, you may want to ask your physician for a prescription for a mild sedative.
7. Jewelry and other accessories should be left at home if possible, or removed prior to the MRI scan. Because they can interfere with the magnetic field of the MRI unit, metal and electronic objects are not allowed in the exam

room.

8. In general, metal objects used in orthopedic surgery pose no risk during MRI. However, a recently placed artificial joint may require the use of another imaging procedure. If there is any question of their presence, an x-ray may be taken to detect the presence of any metal objects.

What to Expect During the Scan

You will be given earplugs and offered headsets that play music to reduce the noise of the MRI scanner, which produces loud thumping and humming noises during imaging. MRI scanner rooms are air-conditioned and well-lit. You will be alone in the exam room during the MRI scan, however, the technologist will be able to see, hear and speak with you at all times.

If a contrast material will be used in the MRI exam, a technologist will insert an IV line into a vein in your hand or arm. A saline solution will drip through the IV to prevent blockage of the IV line until the contrast material is injected. You will be moved into the magnet of the MRI unit and the radiologist and technologist will leave the room while the MRI examination is performed. If a contrast material is used during the examination, it will be injected into the intravenous line (IV) after an initial series of scans. Additional series of images will be taken following the injection.

When the examination is completed, you may be asked to wait until the technologist checks the images in case additional images are needed.

The entire examination is usually completed within 30 to 60 minutes.

What to Expect After the Scan

There are no after effects from having an MRA, and you may resume normal activity immediately. If you have taken a sedative, it is suggested that you have someone drive you home.

About Your Results

One of our board-certified radiologists will read the film, typically within 24 hours. Within 48 hours a report will be sent to the ordering physician, as well as any other physician you may have requested. If you need to pick up your results, you may do so from our medical records department.