

Cochlear Implants and MRI

Your doctor has asked for a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan. You have a cochlear implant made by Cochlear America or a similar implant made by another company. The company suggests removing the magnet inside your implant before having an MRI.

Removing the Magnet

The magnet inside your implant can be removed during a small surgery. After the MRI, another small surgery is needed to put back the magnet. Every time this is done, there is more risk of infection, healing problems, loss of the implant, and the magnet getting dislodged. future magnet dislodgment.

We have reviewed the implant company's guidelines. We have also compared the risks and benefits of two surgeries versus having an MRI with the magnet. UW Health has decided not to remove internal magnets for MRI exams. Instead, we carefully evaluate each patient to decide if MRI is the best test for you.

The magnet your implant may cause shadows on the image. This means that the image is not as clear. The radiologist thought about this when planning for your visit. The radiologist and your doctor also thought about other types of tests. Your doctors have decided MRI will provide the best information that your doctor needs to manage your care.

What to Expect During the MRI

You may feel the magnet wiggling or moving during the MRI. This movement may cause discomfort from the vibration, sound, or noise. To reduce this discomfort,

MRI staff will put ear plugs in your ears, and a plastic "splint" over your implant. This splint is held in place by a bandage wrapped around your head. The bandage and splint lower the chance of the magnet flipping or dislodging during the MRI. Surgery would be required if this happened.

Despite our best efforts to reduce pain, most patients having MRI exams on an area above their waist need anesthesia. Patients having MRI exams of an area below the waist can often complete the MRI without anesthesia.

Other Risks

Though rare, other risks include:

- Damage to your device by causing the magnet to weaken or demagnetize.
- Damage to the tissue around the implant from the vibration of the magnet.

Risks

On the day of your MRI visit, the radiologist will talk with you before the MRI. We want to make sure you understand the risks of MRI and possible other options. We will also ask you to sign a consent form. The consent states that UW Health staff has explained these risks and that you understand them.

Who to Call

If you have questions, you can reach the MRI nurse Monday-Friday 7:30 am-4:00 pm at **608-262-5276**. If the MRI RN does not answer the phone, please leave a voice mail and we will return your call. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#8205.