FAQs ABOUT MRI

What is MRI?
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a medical imaging technique. It uses a magnetic field and pulses of radio wave energy to create images of structures (like bones and cartilage) and organs inside your body. MRI does not use radiation.

What should I do to prepare for an MRI?
There is little to no preparation for an MRI. Certain studies for your abdomen (the stomach area) require that you do not eat or drink anything 4 to 6 hours before the test. Check with your doctor or MRI technologist if you are having an abdominal MRI.

What happens during an MRI?
You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and answer some questions about your medical history and whether you have any metal implanted in your body (for example, a pacemaker and any coils or stents). The reason for this is because MRI uses magnets, which could interact with metal objects in your body. Please make sure you remove all jewelry and piercings before the test.

The test is painless. You will be asked to lie on a table. The MRI technologist will position you for your test. It is very important that you do not move during the MRI. You will hear loud tapping and banging during the test. This is only the scanner changing the magnetic fields to create the images. The technologist will give you earplugs at the start of the procedure to help lessen this noise.

Will I be given contrast for my MRI?
Your doctor may order your MRI to be done with contrast. Contrast is used to better see certain parts of the inside of your body. MRIs with contrast use a chemical element named gadolinium. This helps the MRI to better scan different parts of internal body structures. If you need contrast for your MRI, an IV will be placed into your arm by a staff member.

How long will my MRI take?
An MRI can last from 45 to 60 minutes, depending on the type of test your doctor has ordered.