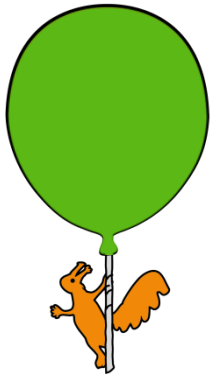


Radiology Department

# MRI or CT Scan

## Under General Anaesthetic



**What to expect when your child comes to the Radiology Department**

**Information for parents & carers**

**About this leaflet**

This leaflet has been designed to give parents and carers as much information as possible about their child's visit to Alder Hey for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) or Computerised Tomography (CT) scan under general anaesthetic.

CT uses several beams of X-ray at the same time, from different angles, to give a detailed picture of the inside of the body.

MRI is a way of looking inside the body without using x-rays. It is a very safe imaging method with no known side effects. It uses a super-conducting magnet which produces a very strong magnetic field.

For safety reasons, you are asked to remove all metallic objects (Hearing aids, clips, jewellery etc) before an MRI scan.

It is also important that we are aware of any metal inside your child's body (surgical clips, pacemakers etc).

If your child is having an MRI scan, please complete the safety checklist which accompanies this leaflet, and bring it with you when you come for your scan.

**Before your appointment**

Your child will not be able to eat or drink for a number of hours before their anaesthetic.

Your appointment letter contains fasting instructions. Please follow these instructions exactly.

If your child eats or drinks **anything** after the time stated in the letter, your child's scan will need to be cancelled. It may not be possible to book another appointment for some time.

If your child is on any essential medication, this should be taken as normal (with a sip of water, if necessary) on the day of your child's scan.

### **What happens on arrival?**

On arrival in the Radiology Department, your child will be assessed. This pre-scan assessment will include measuring your child's temperature, pulse, oxygen saturations and weight.

You will be asked some questions about your child's medical history, and anaesthetic cream will be applied to your child's hand or foot, so that they won't feel the anaesthetic needle.

You will also be seen by the Anaesthetist who will be looking after your child during their scan.

There may be other families present when your child is assessed. If your child has a medical condition, or any special needs

that you wish to discuss in private, please ring 0151 252 5017 before your child's hospital visit.

There is only limited space in the Radiology Department, so no more than 2 adults should accompany your child.

### **Waiting with your child**

We encourage you to bring along your child's favourite toy / activity / comforter to help them relax. You may be in the Radiology Department for several hours.

We do our best to avoid long waiting times, but there are some delays which cannot be avoided. Scans can take longer than expected, or emergency cases sometimes need to be added to the list at short notice. You will be kept informed of any delays.

Two parents / carers can stay with your child in the MRI waiting area, but there is only room for **one parent in the anaesthetic room with your child.**

As soon as your child is asleep, you will be asked to return to the waiting room. Two parents / carers will be allowed into the recovery area as soon as your child has woken up from the anaesthetic.

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Most MRI scans under general anaesthetic last at least 45 minutes, so we encourage parents to go for some refreshments while their child is being scanned.

### **Who gives the General Anaesthetic?**

An anaesthetic may be given by a consultant or a trainee anaesthetist.

After qualifying as doctors, consultant anaesthetists have studied for at least another 7 years in anaesthetics. Trainee anaesthetists are qualified doctors undergoing their 7 years of specialist training under the supervision of a consultant.

An anaesthetist assesses your child's health before the procedure, making sure that they are as fit as possible before having an anaesthetic.

The Anaesthetist is required to make a judgement based on the need for the procedure (MRI scan) weighed against the risks of the anaesthetic.

### **What are the risks & complications of Anaesthesia?**

Serious complications are uncommon. Risk cannot be removed completely, but modern equipment and drugs make it safer than it has ever been.

Most children recover quickly and are soon back to normal after their anaesthetic.

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Some children may suffer side effects like sickness or a sore throat. These usually last only a short time and there are medicines available to treat them if necessary.

The likelihood of complications depends on your child's medical condition and the type of anaesthesia used. The Anaesthetist can discuss this with you in more detail when you attend for your scan.

You will then be asked to sign a form giving consent for your child to have the anaesthetic.

For a child in good health having an anaesthetic for a minor procedure:

- 1 child in 10 might experience a headache, sore throat, sickness or dizziness
- 1 child in 100 might be mildly allergic to one of the drugs that has been given
- 1 child in 20,000 might develop a serious reaction (allergy) to the anaesthetic.

Throughout the whole of life, an individual is at least 100 times more likely to suffer serious injury or death in a road traffic accident than as a result of anaesthesia.

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### **Does my child have to have an injection?**

Your child needs an injection to insert a tiny plastic tube (called a cannula) into a vein to allow medicines and fluids to be given. This should be painless, because

anaesthetic cream is used to numb the skin over the vein.

The anaesthetic cream is applied during your assessment on arrival, as it takes at least 30 minutes to work.

The cannula can be inserted before or after your child is asleep. This depends on the anaesthetist's assessment of your child, and if appropriate, your child's preference.

### **How does my child go to sleep?**

If the cannula is inserted while your child is awake, some medicine can be given into the cannula to make your child sleepy. This normally takes about 10-20 seconds.

Alternatively, the Anaesthetist may get your child to breathe in a mixture of gases which will make them sleepy over 30 seconds to a minute.

### **What happens when my child is asleep?**

Your child is kept asleep by the Anaesthetist who gives them anaesthetic gases to breathe.

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The Anaesthetist continually observes and monitors your child throughout the procedure, and gives anaesthetic medicines as they are required.

### **When and where do children wake up?**

At the end of the scan, your child will be taken into the recovery area within the MRI Department, where they will be woken up.

It usually takes around ten minutes for children to wake up, but they may remain drowsy for some time afterwards.

Your child will be looked after by a Recovery Nurse or Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) until the anaesthetist is happy that they are safely awake.

### **What happens once my child is awake?**

When the Anaesthetist is happy that your child has recovered from the anaesthetic, you can take them home as soon as you are ready.

Your child may be slightly irritable for a while, but they should soon settle. They can be given water or juice to drink if they want it. We advise that you bring a drink with you for the journey home.

You will be given additional information on managing your child at home following a general anaesthetic.

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### **Will my child need to be admitted to a ward?**

We plan to discharge children from the Radiology Department, but some children can be slow to recover from the anaesthetic.

It may be necessary to transfer your child to the surgical day unit for further monitoring until they are well enough to go home.

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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