

Petite Prep Guide: MRI Scan

Helping you prepare and support your child.

WHAT TO SAY:

explain

What is an MRI?

You can say: “The doctors want to take pictures of the inside of your body. They are going to use an machine MRI. An MRI is a camera that looks like a large donut with a bed in the middle where a kid can lay down.”



prepare

What are the steps?

You can say:

- There will be a bed to lie down on that moves up and down, in and out.
- The MRI tech might put a seat belt over your body to keep you safe on the bed.
- The bed will move into the tunnel, but nothing in the tunnel will touch your body.
- When the pictures are being taken you will hear loud noises, like the sound of a drier with shoes in it or knocking on a door.
- Your job will be to hold your body still for the pictures.
- We can make a plan for what will be helpful while they are taking the pictures.

WHAT TO DO:

coping plan

Together, you can make a plan for what helps your child feel calm and in control. Here are some ideas that other kids have shared:

- Do they want to close their eyes during the scan? What do they want to think about? Favorite movie, sing favorite song in their head? Do they want to bring a comfort items (no metal).

play & practice

- Play through the steps with a toy or stuffed animal to show them the steps.
- Practice playing the statue game - holding as still as a statue - to help them prepare for holding their body still during the scan.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR TEAM:

support

- Can a caregiver be with the child throughout the scan?
- Will there be anything on my child's body (a seat belt, a vest, a head halo)
- Is there anything to block the noise like headphones or ear plugs?
- Will my child need to follow any specific instructions during the scan?

Pain

- If your child is in pain due to underlying symptoms, it is appropriate to ask if there are pain support options.
- Can your child take a break if positioning causes pain?

Emotional Support

- If your child is highly anxious about the experience you can ask if there are there are medication options to support relaxation?
- Is there a child life specialist to provide preparation, support, or coping tips?