

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the Pituitary

Your doctor has recommend you for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of your pituitary gland. The pituitary is a very small hormone-producing gland located behind the nose. An MRI uses a magnetic field to create detailed images of your head. An MRI produces good soft-tissue images and allows the physician to evaluate different types of body tissue, as well as distinguish normal, healthy tissue from diseased tissue. Our team of specialist physicians will use these images to make a detailed study of your pituitary gland and to find possible problems. Our team of physicians, nurses, and technologists is led by our chief of head and neck radiology, Barry Pressman, M.D.

Before coming to the Cedars-Sinai Taper Imaging Center:

- You *may* eat and drink before this exam.
- If patients are claustrophobic (fearful of small, enclosed areas) or experience pain when lying on their back for more than 30 minutes, their referring physician may prescribe a relaxant or pain medication to help them through the procedure. The imaging physicians at Cedars-Sinai will *not* prescribe these medications for you.
- Please leave your jewelry and valuables at home.
- Please wear comfortable clothing.
- Although we do not anticipate any delay in your scheduled appointment, we recommend that you bring a book, a magazine, or a music player to help pass the time while you are waiting.
- You may also bring a CD to listen to while being scanned.

After arriving at the Taper Imaging Center:

- Before the exam, you must inform the technologist, radiology nurse and/or physician **if you have allergies, are pregnant or are nursing.**
- You will be asked to fill out a questionnaire which will determine if an MR scan is safe for you. People with various implants (usually metallic) or with metal in their bodies (including some tattoos) may have difficulty with an MRI—which utilizes a strong magnetic field. The imaging physician needs to be informed of any of these potential problems.

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During the exam:

- For this exam, you will be asked to lay down on the scanning table, head-first with arms at your side.
- Coils (special devices to improve image quality) may be placed around your head.
- The scanning table will slide your whole body into the magnet.
- During the scan you will not feel anything, but will hear intermittent humming, thumping, clicking and knocking sounds.
- Earplugs will be provided to help mask the noise and to allow you to listen to music.
- In most cases, the imaging physician requests a contrast agent (dye) to improve the quality of the images. The contrast agent is injected into a vein in the arm, which may cause a cool sensation.
- As pictures are taken, you must hold very still, and in some cases, hold you breath.
- The technologist is *always* able to see and hear you during the exam.
- The MRI exam takes approximately 45 minutes.

After the exam:

- Your films will be examined by an imaging physician and a report sent to your doctor. Your doctor will review the results with you.
- To request copies of your pictures on a PC-compatible CD-Rom, call (310) 423-8000. To request a copy of your report, call (310) 423-8000.

Parking at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center:

- Taper Imaging Center parking is located in **Lot 7** at the **corner of San Vicente Blvd. & Gracie Allen Dr.** (Alden Dr.). Enter off Sherbourne Drive.
- Parking is partially validated and validation is available in the imaging center lobby.
- Or, park in the Medical Center North Tower off George Burns Road.
- There is a large metal sculpture in the shape of the number "8" in front of the S. Mark Taper Foundation Imaging Center.
- There is a curbside patient drop-off zone on Gracie Allen Dr.