IDA-TALLINNA KESKHAIGLA

AS Ida-Tallinna Keskhaigla
Ravi 18, 10138 Tallinn
Rg-kood 10822068
Tel 666 1900
E-post info@itk.ee
www.itk.ee

Magnetic resonance enterography

The purpose of this information leaflet is to give you information about magnetic resonance enterography (MR enterography), a special type of magnetic resonance imaging used to examine the small intestine. The examination will be prescribed by a doctor.

What is MR enterography?

MR enterography uses a strong magnetic field and radio waves to produce an image of the small intestine that helps the doctor diagnose inflammatory bowel disease, intestinal obstruction and abnormalities of the abdominal organs. MR enterography does not use ionising radiation or X-rays, which makes the procedure safe for you. **Including preparation, the examination takes two hours (preparation and the procedure itself).**

Preparation for the procedure

Please arrive at the Centre of Radiology reception 40 minutes before the procedure.

Before the procedure, you will be asked to fill in a questionnaire.

- A strong magnetic field is used for the procedure, so no metal objects or mechanical devices may be taken into the examination room. These may pose a risk to yourself, the staff and the equipment.
- Do not eat for six hours before the procedure. You can drink a little bit of water and take any medications you need.
- When you come to the examination, please wear something light and, if possible, leave jewellery, watches, dentures, glasses, etc. at home as you will be asked to remove them for the procedure.
- You will be given 1 litre of a special solution (Fortrans and water solution) to drink to achieve bowel distension in order to obtain high-quality images. You will need to drink the solution at a slow pace within the specified time; it may cause diarrhoea.
- You must leave all removable metal objects and personal items in the locker in the changing room. You will be given suitable clothing to change into for the procedure.
- If you have claustrophobia, i.e. a fear of confined spaces or anxiety, talk to your doctor, who will prescribe a mild sedative if needed so that the procedure can be performed. If you are afraid, also inform the radiology technician performing the procedure.

The main indications for MR enterography are:

- Crohn’s disease
- inflammatory bowel disease
- internal bleeding
- tumours
- intestinal obstruction

Contraindications for the procedure

If you are or suspect you might be pregnant, inform your doctor and the radiology technician performing the examination. Although no evidence of foetal damage has been found so far, this method of examination is used during pregnancy only in severe or life-threatening cases, and the contrast agent is injected only in the case of a vital indication.

If you have metal implants or foreign objects in your body, please inform the radiology technician performing the procedure before entering the examination room. In most cases, it is safe for you to have the procedure with metal implants, except for a few contraindications.

The following foreign objects in or on your body may interfere with MR enterography and compromise your safety during the examination:

- a pacemaker (with the exception of an MRI-resistant cardiac pacemaker programmed to a special mode with a specific device for the time spent in the examination room and during the procedure);
- a brain aneurysm clip;
- a neuronal transmitter;
- joint prostheses, screws, fracture fixation plates;
- prostheses;
- an artificial heart valve;
- metal fragments;
- stents, clips;
- braces, orthodontic wires.

If possible, take your implant card with you.

During the procedure

- During the, procedure, you will lie still on your stomach on the examination table for about 45 minutes. You will be given an intravenous injection of a contrast agent and a medication that slows down bowel activity (Buscopan). Therefore, a venous cannula will be placed in your arm. The contrast agent used for the procedure contains gadolinium and is usually well tolerated. Allergic reactions are very rare.
- Special coil(s) will be placed on your back and the examination table will slide into the magnetic resonance imaging or MRI machine, which is a ventilated and illuminated tunnel open at both ends. During the procedure, the MRI machine will make loud hammering and banging noises. You will be given headphones and earplugs to reduce the noise. It is very important that the area being examined is motionless. Therefore, the radiology technician will repeatedly ask you to hold your breath.
- During the examination, you will be monitored through a window and via a camera. If you experience any discomfort, you can use the safety button to alert the radiology technician.

After the procedure

After the procedure, it is recommended that you drink more fluids than usual to help the contrast agent leave your body faster. You may get dressed and leave right after the procedure. You will find out the result of the examination from your doctor.

Examinations are carried out at the A-corpus (Ravi 18) and at the Magdaleena X-corpus (Asula põik 5) in East Tallinn Central Hospital. If you can’t make your appointment, please contact the Centre of Radiology reception at the telephone number 620 7200 (Ravi 18) or 666 5130 (Asula põik 5).

Additional information

If you have any questions about the examination, you can get information from the radiological examinations helpline. The helpline cannot register you for an examination or provide information about the results of your examination.

You can call the helpline Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 16:00.

- telephone 666 5166
- e-mail radioloogiainfo [at] itk.ee

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