MRI Arthrogram

What is an MRI arthrogram?

An MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) arthrogram is a two-part study. The first part is called an arthrogram. It is a procedure where the radiologist injects contrast solution (dye) into a joint using an ultrasound and/or an X-ray machine. Once the injection part of the test is done, your child will go into the MRI suite to get an image of the injected joint. (Please see separate handout, PE017 MRI, describing the MRI experience).

Common joints that require this study are:

- Hip
- Shoulder
- Elbow
- Wrist
How do I prepare my child?

• Talk with your child. Explain what will happen during the procedure before you come to the hospital.
• Dress your child in comfortable clothes that are easy to remove. Sweats are a good choice. Your child will be given a gown to change into.
• All metal and jewelry should be removed before arrival.

How do we check in for the appointment?

If you will be late or have questions for either location, please call Radiology at 206-987-2089.

For Seattle Campus:

• Seattle Children’s Main Campus, 4800 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105. Use Ocean Parking.
• Arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Being late can affect other appointments and can delay yours as well.
• Check in at the level 6 registration desk inside the Ocean entrance. After you complete registration, you will be directed to the Radiology reception area.
• Upon arrival, females over the age of 12 will be asked to provide a urine sample for pregnancy screening (for hip MRI arthrogram only).

For Bellevue Campus:

• Bellevue Clinic and Surgery Center, 1500 116 Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. Park in the underground parking garage.
• Arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Being late can affect other appointments and can delay yours as well.
• Check in at the level 2 registration desk. After registration you will be directed to a seating area to wait.
• Upon arrival, females over the age of 12 will be asked to provide a urine sample for pregnancy screening (for hip MRI arthrogram only).

What happens during the test?

The technologist will bring you and your child to a changing room so they can change into a gown. The technologist will ensure that all metal and jewelry are removed. Once your child has changed, you and your child will be brought into a special room called a fluoroscopy suite where the radiologist will explain the procedure in more detail and answer any questions. Before the exam begins, you (or your child if over 18) will go over the consent form with the radiologist and sign if you agree to go on with the procedure. Your child will lie flat on the table to prepare for the arthrogram procedure.
The radiologist will first clean the area with a sterile soap and place drapes around the area to keep it protected and clean. The radiologist will then numb the area with lidocaine using a small, thin needle. Once the area is numb, the radiologist, along with an ultrasonographer, will guide another needle into the joint using ultrasound. Once the radiologist has confirmed the needle is in the correct place, a small amount of contrast solution will be injected into the joint. Your child may feel some pressure as the needle goes into the joint, but little to no pain. Once the contrast solution has been injected, the radiologist will remove the needle, clean the area, and place a band aid. This process varies in length of time but can usually be completed within 30 minutes. You and your child will then be taken to the MRI suite to complete the imaging process.

**Does the exam use radiation?**

There are rare instances where the radiologist may need to use fluoroscopy (live X-ray) to know where to inject. If fluoroscopy is needed, radiation dose is minimal. The ultrasound and MRI equipment do not use radiation.

**What happens after the test?**

Once the MRI is completed, you and your child will be escorted to the changing room where your child can remove the gown and change back into their clothing.

**How do we get the test results?**

The images from your child’s radiology procedure are typically reviewed by the radiologist within 24 hours, and a report will be sent to the doctor who ordered the test. If your child has a clinic or doctor appointment scheduled, the doctor will review the results with you then. If you do not have a visit scheduled, you should call your child’s doctor for the results.