

Preparation Information Sheet

BREAST MRI

What is Breast MRI ?

MRI is a well established imaging tool requiring the patient to lie in a strong magnetic field. There is no radiation. It is most commonly used for joints such as the knee, and the brain and spine.

It is now becoming a well established imaging tool for the breast, in addition to mammography and breast ultrasound.

Who should have Breast MRI ?

1. Patients who are at high risk of breast cancer.
2. Patients with newly diagnosed breast cancer.
3. Patients with unresolved suspicious areas on other imaging.
4. Patients with suspected rupture of breast implants.
5. Patients with cancer in axillary lymph nodes, with an unknown primary tumour.

How is it done ?

The patient lies prone for about 40 minutes in an MRI unit. An intravenous injection of intravenous gadolinium is given to highlight blood vessels.

Analysis of images can sometimes be complex, and usually 2 radiologists report the studies.

Will it hurt?

The breast is constrained but not compressed as it is in mammography. However, it is important that the patient remains quite still.

Is there a Medicare rebate ?

Currently there is a rebate on "licensed" MRI units for high risk patients only. It seems this will change soon, making breast MRI more accessible. We will let you know as soon as there are any changes.

Where is it available ?

Currently PRP has facilities for Breast MRI at Gordon, Norwest Private Hospital, North Gosford and Wollongong.