

# Visiting the Hospital for an MRI

## Series 1

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Sometimes doctors might need to see what is going on inside my body. When that happens, the doctor might send me to the hospital to get an MRI. MRIs are machines that take special pictures of the organs in my body. Those pictures help doctors understand how my body is working and how they can help me stay healthy.



When we arrive at the hospital for the MRI, we will go to the check-in desk. Someone will ask for my name and some other information.

Then we may wait in a waiting area until it is time for my MRI. There may be chairs, books, or toys to look at while we wait. I can bring something that helps me feel calm, like my favorite fidget, stuffed animal, or blanket.



When it is time, someone from the hospital will take me and my grown-up to the MRI area.

Before the MRI starts, I might be asked to change into a hospital gown. I will need to take off jewelry, glasses, or anything metal, because metal cannot go in the MRI room.



Sometimes, the staff will place small stickers or pads on my skin to help with the pictures.

If I need medicine to help me stay calm or sleepy, the doctors and nurses will help.



The MRI room might look bright and clean, with medical machines and lights. The MRI machine looks like a big, round donut with a bed that moves in and out. It takes pictures using magnets and does not hurt.

When it is my turn to go into the MRI machine, I will lie down on the bed and stay very still. The technologist might put a light blanket over me to help me feel cozy.



When the MRI starts, the bed will slowly move into the big round machine. It might feel a little tight inside, but it is safe. I will need to lie very still so that the MRI pictures come out clear.

The MRI machine will make loud sounds when it takes pictures—sometimes it makes banging, knocking, or buzzing sounds. These sounds are normal and show that the machine is working.



During the MRI, I can wear headphones or earplugs to protect my ears and make being in the MRI machine more comfortable. Sometimes, music or stories can play through the headphones to help me relax. I can imagine I am in a spaceship or listening to a drumbeat while I stay still. I can use deep breathing or think about my favorite place while I lie still. I can remind myself that the sounds mean the machine is working. I can remember that I am safe, brave, and doing a great job.



When the pictures are done, the bed will move back out. The technologist will help me sit up slowly. If I changed clothes, I can put my own clothes back on. We might wait a few minutes while the technologist checks the pictures. Then we can go home or to the next part of our day.

I can be proud of myself because I did a great job at my MRI! The doctors and my family are proud of me for being brave and helping them learn more about my health.



# Autism TOOLKIT

[autismtoolkit.org](https://autismtoolkit.org)

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