

Cholangiopancreatography

Appointment Information

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Address: _____

Notes: _____

About

Magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography (MRCP) is a special type of MRI exam that produces detailed images of the hepatobiliary and pancreatic systems, including the liver, gallbladder, bile ducts, pancreas and pancreatic duct.

Radiologists use MRCP to:

- Examine diseases of the liver, gallbladder, bile ducts, pancreas and pancreatic duct. These may include tumors, stones, inflammation or infection.
- Evaluate patients with pancreatitis to detect the underlying cause.
- Help to diagnose unexplained abdominal pain.
- Provide a less invasive alternative to endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP). ERCP is a diagnostic procedure that combines endoscopy, which uses an illuminated optical instrument to examine inside the body, with iodinated contrast injection and x-ray images.

During the scan, you will be positioned on the moveable examination table. Devices that contain coils capable of sending and receiving radio waves may be placed around or adjacent to the area of the body being studied.

If a contrast material will be used in the MRI exam, a nurse or technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) catheter, also known as an IV line, into a vein in your hand or arm. A saline solution may be used. The solution will drip through the IV to prevent blockage of the IV catheter until the contrast material is injected.

You will be moved into the magnet of the MRI unit and the radiologist and technologist will leave the room while the MRI examination is performed.

If a contrast material is used during the examination, it will be injected into the intravenous line (IV) after an initial series of scans. Additional series of images will be taken during or following the injection.

The actual MRCP exam takes about 10 minutes, but it is often performed with a standard MRI of the abdomen, which may last approximately 30 minutes and involve the use of a contrast material. In this case, the entire examination is usually completed within 45 minutes.

Preparations

You will be asked to wear a gown during the Cholangiopancreatography (MRCP).

The radiologist should also know if you have any serious health problems, or if you have recently had surgery. Some conditions, such as severe kidney disease may prevent you from being given contrast material for an MRI. If there is a history of kidney disease, it may be necessary to perform a blood test to determine whether the kidneys are functioning adequately.

Women should always inform their radiologist or technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant.