**MRI Upper and Lower Extremity** - Extremity MRI scans are taken of the bones and soft tissue (muscles, tendons and ligaments) of the following: arms, legs, hips, pelvis, feet, ankles, wrists, and shoulders. These scans evaluate for unexplained pain or swelling, trauma, a known mass and questionable fractures. MR technology produces good soft-tissue images and allows the physician to evaluate different types of body tissue, as well as distinguish normal, healthy tissue from diseased tissue.

Your physician may order the MRI with or without a contrast agent depending on your diagnosis. If contrast material is used, it will be injected through an intravenous line (IV). The contrast material most commonly used for an MRI exam is called gadolinium. Because gadolinium does not contain iodine, it can be used safely in patients with contrast allergies.

You may follow your regular daily routine and take food and medications as usual. Please inform the technologist if you are pregnant as contrasted exams are not preformed during pregnancy.

If you are a diabetic please consult your physician as to any special instructions concerning your diabetes prior to the test. If you are age 40 or older or a diabetic; you will need labs drawn prior to your contrasted exam. Please consult your physician in regards to these labs.

Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test. You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to wear a gown during the test. You will be required to remove all objects that are not compatible with the MRI scanner.

Patients who might have metal objects in certain parts of their bodies may also require an x-ray prior to an MRI. You should notify the technologist or radiologist of any shrapnel, bullets, or other pieces of metal which may be present in your body due to accidents. Foreign bodies near the eyes are particularly important. Plain film x-ray clearance will be done for any question of metal foreign bodies to your eyes.

If you have claustrophobia (fear of enclosed spaces) or anxiety you can be sedated for your exam. Please remember that you must have a driver with you at your appointment time in order to receive sedation. All of our medications for sedation are given by mouth. We are only staffed to sedate until 3:00pm Monday thru Friday. If your appointment is scheduled after
3:00pm you will need to ask your physician for a prescription for a mild sedative. All sedation requires a driver.

For this exam, you will be asked to lie down on the scanning table, head-first with arms at your side. Coils (special devices to improve image quality) will be placed around the region of the spine being scanned. The scanning table will slide your whole body into the magnet. During the scan you will not feel anything, but will hear intermittent humming, thumping, clicking and knocking sounds. Earplugs or headphones will be provided to help mask the noise. You must be still during the exam, because movement causes blurred images. You may be told to hold your breath for short periods of time.

The images will be reviewed by a Radiologist (a doctor that reads x-rays) and a report will be sent to your ordering physician in 48 hours. The scan takes approximately 45 minutes. The technologist will give you discharge instructions after the completion of the test.