

BestMSK Spinal MRI: Patient Advice



- MRIs provide a picture of the anatomy of the spine.
- MRIs cannot tell how someone feels and are not a diagnosis.
- MRIs can be used to plan treatment with you and rule out serious conditions such as cancer or fractures.
- MRIs are rarely needed for people with back or neck pain.
- MRIs should be requested after assessment by a specialist.



- Some of the words used in MRI reports can sound scary. However, we know that nine out of ten people with no pain have degeneration of discs on MRI^{1,2}.
- These findings are more common as we become older and can be signs of a naturally maturing spine.

If you have any questions in relation to your report, please discuss with the clinician who sent you for the MRI.

References:

1. Jarvik JJ, Hollingworth W, Heagerty P, Haynor DR, Deyo RA. The Longitudinal Assessment of Imaging and Disability of the Back (LAIDBack) Study: baseline data. Spine (Phila Pa 1976). 2001 May 15;26(10):1158-66.
2. Nakashima H, Yukawa Y, Suda K, Yamagata M, Ueta T, Kato F. Abnormal findings on magnetic resonance images of the cervical spines in 1211 asymptomatic subjects. Spine (Phila Pa 1976). 2015 Mar 15;40(6):392-8