

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