What Happens After a Medical Imaging Scan? Reports, Results and Follow-Up

31 JAN 2023 · 3 MIN READ

The scan is one part of the diagnostic process. After MRI, CT, ultrasound, X-ray or DEXA, the images must be reviewed, interpreted and communicated in the context of the clinical question.

Step 1: Image review

A radiologist reviews the examination, including relevant prior imaging where available. Complex studies may contain hundreds or thousands of images and multiple reconstructions. The review may include measurements, comparison with previous examinations and assessment of whether the scan adequately answers the referral question.

Step 2: The radiology report

The radiology report summarises the important findings, provides an interpretation and may recommend correlation, follow-up or additional testing. The report is generally sent to the referring GP or specialist. The images themselves are also available through the clinic's image-access pathway.

Urgent or unexpected findings

When an urgent finding is identified, the radiology team follows an escalation process appropriate to the level of concern. This may include contacting the referrer or another responsible clinician. The exact pathway depends on the finding and the patient's circumstances.

Incidental findings

A scan may show an abnormality unrelated to the original reason for imaging. These are called incidental findings. Many are benign or need no action. Others may require comparison with previous imaging, a dedicated examination, a blood test or clinical review.

What happens next

Your referring clinician combines the imaging result with your symptoms, examination, medical history and other tests. The next step may be reassurance, treatment, further imaging, specialist referral or surveillance. A radiology report should not be interpreted in isolation from the clinical context.

How long will the report take?

Report timing varies with the type and complexity of the examination, the need for prior comparison and whether additional review is required. Urgent examinations are prioritised according to clinical need. Please contact our lovely front desk for further information.

Related Patient Guides

- PG0001 – Welcome to MBR Health: Advanced Medical Imaging and Regenerative Medicine
- PG0002 – How to Choose the Right Imaging Test
- PG0003 – Why Image Quality Matters in Medical Imaging

- PG0005 – Incidental Findings: What are They and Why They Matter
- PG0006 – Preparing for Your Appointment at MBR Health
- PG0007 – Patient Safety at MBR Health

Frequently Asked Questions

For other FAQs please visit our FAQs page

Can I access my images and report?

Images are made available through the clinic's patient image portal. Reports are sent to the referrer and may also be made available to the patient in accordance with clinic policy.

What if the report recommends follow-up?

Arrange review with the referring clinician. Follow-up recommendations are based on the imaging appearance, the clinical question and recognised management pathways, but may change when your full history is considered.

Does a normal scan mean nothing is wrong?

Not necessarily. Every imaging test has limitations. Symptoms may arise from conditions that are not visible on that examination or that require a different protocol or modality.

> **Important:** Seek urgent medical care for severe or rapidly worsening symptoms rather than waiting for a routine report.

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