What is a Musculoskeletal system MRI?

A Musculoskeletal system MRI is a medical test that provides detailed images of bones, joints or soft tissues (muscles, tendons, and ligaments) to determine the presence of certain diseases.

An orthopedic exam of the upper extremity may include:

- Shoulder
- Humerus
- Elbow
- Forearm
- Wrist
- Hand/fingers

An orthopedic exam of the lower extremity may include:

- Hip
- Knee
- Ankle
- Femur
- Lower leg
- Foot/toes

When is a Musculoskeletal system MRI ordered?

- Degenerative joint disorders such as arthritis
- Meniscal or labral tears
- Joint abnormalities due to trauma (such as tears in the ligaments and tendons)
- Sports-related injuries and work-related injuries caused by repeated strain
- Infections (such as osteomyelitis)
- Tumors involving the soft tissues around the joints and extremities
- Pain, swelling, or bleeding in the tissues in and around the joints and extremities
**Patient preparation**

- There is no preparation for this exam
- Wear comfortable loose fitting clothing with no metal snaps, zippers or other metal material
- Blood work may be required prior to study depending on your age or medical history

**What happens during a Musculoskeletal system MRI?**

A MRI technologist will verify your identity and obtain medical history for the radiologist. You will be positioned on the moveable padded examination table. The MRI technologist will make sure you are as comfortable as possible because you need to hold still for the duration of your scan. The MRI machine is loud, so for your comfort our MRI offers a patient stereo system that allows you to listen to a CD or radio station during your study. You are welcome to bring a CD of your own.

Certain MRI exams require the use of a contrasting agent, which is given through an intravenous (IV) injection. If this is necessary, it will be discussed in detail with you prior to injection.

**Length of Procedure**

The MRI scan will take up to 30-45 minutes depending on the area of interest and the use of a contrast injection.