

Ordering Guide - MRI vs. CT
Head

Brain Acute Trauma - Bleeds or Skull Fractures	CT (without contrast)
Brain Ataxia or Dementia	MRI (without contrast)
Brain Headaches, Strokes or Focal Neurological Defects	MRI or CT (without contrast)
Brain Infections, Primary Tumors, Metastases, Epilepsy, Neuroendocrine, Vertigo, Hearing Loss or Vision Loss	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Orbits Masses	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with contrast
Orbits Optic Neuritis, Uveitis, Scleritis or Painful Vision Loss	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Temporal Bones Conductive Hearing Loss or Congenital Anomalies	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with & w/out contrast
Temporal Bones Masses	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with contrast
Paranasal Sinuses Allergic/Infectious Conditions	CT (without contrast)
Paranasal Sinuses Masses	MRI or CT (with contrast)
Temporomandibular Joints	MRI (without contrast)
Intracranial Vasculature	MRI w/out contrast CT with contrast

Neck

Neck Masses, Lymph Nodes, Larynx, Pharynx or Salivary Glands	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with contrast
Neck Sialolithiasis	CT (without contrast)
Carotid Arteries	MRI with & w/out contrast CTA with & w/out contrast

Spine

Trauma	CT (without contrast)
Brachial Plexopathy, Infections or Metastases	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Bone Marrow, Discs, Spinal Cord, Nerve	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Roots or Paraspinal Soft Tissue	MRI (without contrast)
Spinal Stenosis or Facet Joint Arthritis	MRI or CT (without contrast)
Postoperative C-Spine	MRI (without contrast)
Postoperative L-Spine Rule Out Recurrent HNP vs Epidural Scarring	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Postoperative C-Spine or L-Spine Rule Out Bone Graft Pseudoarthrosis/Hardware Failure	CT (without contrast)

Pelvis

General	CT (without contrast)
Gynecologic Imaging Endometrium, Endometriosis, Adenomyosis or Ovarian Tumors	MRI (with & w/out contrast)

Chest

Lung Parenchyma Masses, Infiltrates, Bronchiectasis or Fibrosis	CT (without contrast)
Mediastinum and Hila Masses or Lymphadenopathy	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with contrast
Aorta Dissection or Aneurysms	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with contrast
Pulmonary Arteries Emboli	CT (with contrast)
Heart Valves, Myocardium or Function	MRI (without contrast)
Coronary Arteries	CT (with contrast)

Musculoskeletal

Joints Tendons, Ligaments, Capsules, Articular Cartilage, discs, Menisci, Synovium or Bursae	MRI (without contrast)
Bone Marrow Avascular Necrosis, Bone Infarcts, Bone Bruises, Erosions or Metastases	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Inflammatory Arthritis (RA) & Infections Osteomyelitis, Myositis, Septic Arthritis or Diabetic Feet	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Soft Tissue Masses	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Fractures Fx Alignment & Healing, Subtle Cortical Avulsion Fx or Sacral Insufficiency Fx	CT (without contrast)
Other Stress Fractures	MRI (without contrast)
Bone Tumors Osteoid & Chondroid Primary Tumors, Blastic Masses or Osteoid Osteomas	CT (with & w/out contrast)
Other Bone Tumors Primary and Metastatic	MRI (with & w/out contrast)
Calcifications Myositis Ossifications or Joint Bodies	CT (without contrast)

Abdomen

General Evaluation Acute Pain, Inflammation or Cancer Survey	CT (with contrast)
Liver Masses, Cirrhosis or Biliary Pathology	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with & w/out contrast
Pancreas	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with & w/out contrast
Adrenals	MRI without contrast CT with & w/out contrast
Gastrointestinal Tract Diverticulitis, Appendicitis or Crohn's Disease	CT (with contrast)
Urinary Tract General or Renal Masses	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with & w/out contrast
Urinary Tract Stone Disease	CT (without contrast)
Arteries Aorta, Renal Arteries or Superior Mesenteric Artery	MRI with & w/out contrast CT with contrast

Note: Certain clinical symptoms and conditions may alter the advisability of choosing CT vs. MRI or the appropriateness of administering intravenous contrast. Please feel free to consult with our radiologists about the right studies and protocols for your patients, or visit <http://www.acr.org/Quality-Safety/Appropriateness-Criteria> for more information.