My MRI with Liver Disease

November 29, 2018 By Karen Hoyt

Karen Hoyt is a blogger who has a story about hepatitis C, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, liver cancer, and liver transplantation. This excerpt first appeared on Karen's I Help C blog.

Getting ready for ANY type of test can be stressful. Getting a Magnetic Resonance Image or MRI means something is probably not going well for you. My MRI with liver disease was how I was diagnosed. It was a hot day, and I was a hot mess. With Hepatic Encephalopathy from liver failure, I put on a good face, but was totally incoherent. A few years later, my next MRI was following an ultrasound and CAT scan that both showed a cancerous tumor on my liver. If this is scaring you, hang on. For everything that goes wrong, there are lots of things that will go right. I'm still here to tell the story, so these things CAN have happy endings.

Before an MRI
Eating before the MRI is optional. In one case, I drank a liter of fluid to prepare. In an emergency MRI, I had come straight from a meal and then was told to drink Volumen for contrast. For the next one, I had to come after fasting overnight. What this tells you is that each person, and situation is different. Just follow your doctor's orders to the letter.

Wearing stretchy clothes with no snaps or zippers may mean you don't have to get naky and put on a hospital gown. I go for yoga pants or sweats. For the ladies, if you have a comfortable sports bra, wearing it will save you time, and also the effort of removing it. If it makes you feel better, ask to wear cozy socks. I do. XO

All Alone
If you're going alone, lock everything in your car except your drivers license, insurance card, Social Security Card, and your form of payment. Jewelry will have to be removed anyway, so I always take mine off before going in.

About going alone … it was my preferred method. I have never needed a ride to or from. It was always a somber occasion. I didn't want any distraction. I wanted all the attention on me. Even now, I always try to be as focused as possible, and don't allow my mind to wander off into anxiety, stress, fear, or drama. I listen to my thoughts. I put them in them in order, if they happen to flitter off. They usually do, and I pray or meditate during severe hepatic encephalopathy episodes. I learned that if I were quiet and focused, everything around me was calmer.

Getting an IV started is part of the process. They will inject contrast fluid called gadolinium to get a

good look at your entire abdominal area.

The MRI Machine...Click here to read about going in to the donut hole and other MRI tips that Karen offers.

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