

If you've ever suffered a bout of insomnia and found yourself awake in the wee hours of the morning, you may have seen some infomercials on the use of magnets and your health. Of course, none of their claims have been scientifically verified but it does sound great to have something as simple as a magnet, make a difference in your life.

Yet the healthcare industry does use magnets to help improve the health of our patients. One use of magnets comes in the form of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (or MRI) scanners. An MRI scanner is a powerful diagnostic tool that can create 2 or 3 dimensional images of the different parts of the body. An MRI is often ordered by a doctor to diagnose many different types of injuries or diseases including:

- 1) Multiple Sclerosis
- 2) Brain tumors
- 3) Stroke
- 4) Torn muscles or ligament injuries in the spine, shoulders and knees
- 5) Cancer

Unlike a CT or X-ray, MRI scanners do not use radiation to create an image. The MRI scanner uses magnets and radio waves that are reflected from the body, to create their images. MRI scanners can create a powerful magnetic field, at least 1000 – 4000 times the strength of the Earth's magnetic field. Since the magnetic field can be so strong, special precautions are taken prior to anyone entering that field. MRI technologists routinely assess their patients to ensure that everyone entering that magnetic field is as safe as they can be. Pacemakers, credit cards and watches should not be brought into the MRI magnetic field. There are many more items that an MRI technologist will ask their patients to also leave out of the scanner. At Lower Umpqua Hospital, every effort is made to make our patients as safe and comfortable as possible as some of the MRI scans can last as long as 45 minutes!

Lower Umpqua Hospital is pleased to offer, in conjunction with ABCT Inc, MRI services every Tuesday. The MRI service is staffed with highly trained technologists that will ask you screening questions about your health to determine if an MRI is the best examination for you and which scan to perform. Just let your healthcare provider know that you want your MRI scan done at Lower Umpqua Hospital, and we will happily take your appointment and get you scanned.

If you have any questions about MRI exams or any radiology exams, please call the Lower Umpqua Hospital Radiology Department at 541.271.6326