

IMAGING GUIDELINES

COMMON INDICATIONS FOR MRI AND CT

THESE SPECIFIC DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING EXAMS ARE THE MOST COMMONLY ORDERED MRI AND CT EXAMS. THIS IS NOT AN ALL-INCLUSIVE LIST OF ALL SERVICES WE OFFER.

INDICATIONS	EVALUATE FOR	MODALITY	CONTRAST
Brain/Head			
Dementia	Alzheimer's disease, normal pressure hydrocephalus (NPH)	MRI	N
Gait disturbance	Tumor, stroke	MRI	Y
Headache: acute severe	Subarachnoid hemorrhage	CT	N
Headache: chronic atypical	Spontaneous intracranial hypotension (SIH), idiopathic hypertrophic pachymeningitis (IHP), other	MRI	Y
Neurological symptoms: progressive fluctuating	Tumor, demyelinating disease (MS, ADEM), Lyme disease	MRI	Y
Seizures	Tumor, MTS vascular malformation	MRI	Y
Transient ischemic attack (TIA)	Vascular stenosis	MRA	N - COW Y - Neck
Stroke: acute sub acute chronic	Infarction hemorrhage	MRI, MRA	N
TMJ: pain clicking locking	TMJ disorder	MRI	N
Trauma: acute	Fracture, hemorrhage, contusion	CT	N
Trauma: delayed	Subdural hematoma (SDH), diffuse axonal injury	CT/MRI	Y
Visual defect: temporal visual field cut unilateral visual field defect	Pituitary adenoma, CVA, tumor	MRI	Y
ENT			
Double vision, visual loss	Optic neuritis, MS, tumor, infarct	MRI	Y
Hearing loss: conductive (CHL)	Developmental, otitis media, cholesteatoma	CT	N
Hearing loss: sensorineural (SHL)	CPA tumor, brainstem lesion, subarachnoid disease	MRI	Y
Malignancy staging	Metastases	CT	Y
Neck mass	Otitis media, cholesteatoma, vascular lesion	CT	Y
Otoscopic abnormality	Tumor, MTS vascular malformation	MRI	Y
Tinnitus: pulsatile	Vascular tumor (CT, MRI), vascular anomaly (MRA)	CT, MRI/MRA	Y
Tinnitus: continuous	Tumor, rare: MS	CT, MRI	Y
Abdomen			
Biliary system abnormality	Choledocholithiasis, gallbladder, common bile duct, pancreatic duct	MRCP	N
Jaundice	Cholangiocarcinoma, liver disease	CT, MRI	Depends
Kidney: known renal cell carcinoma	Staging	CT	Y - pre/post
Weight loss, back pain	Pancreatic cancer	CT	Y - pre/post
Weight loss, pain, bowel inflammation	Crohn's disease	CT, MRI	Y

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INDICATIONS	EVALUATE FOR	MODALITY	CONTRAST
Abdomen/Pelvis			
General pain	Mass or inflammation	CT	Y
Hematuria, flank pain	Ureteral stone, renal cancer	CT	Y
Pelvic pain	Appendicitis, lower quadrant pain	CT	Y
Shortness of breath, acute abdomen	Perforation, diverticulitis	CT	Y
Chest			
Atypical chest pain, difficult chest cases	Aortic pathologies (dissection/aneurysm)	CT	Y
Cancer	Lung, esophageal	CT	Y
Chronic lung disease, diffuse lung disease	Fibrosis	CT	N
Pelvis			
Female pelvis-pain	Vaginal bleeding suspect fibroids/ovarian cyst	MRI	Y
F/U treatment, gynecologic malignancies	Fibrosis vs. tumor recurrence vs. radiation changes	MRI	Y
Pelvic pain, incontinence	Prolapse	MRI	Y
Staging of gynecologic malignancies	Cervical, endometrial, ovarian cancers	MRI, CT	Y
Right lower quadrant pain	Appendicitis	CT	Y
Musculoskeletal			
MSK fractures	Stress fracture	MRI	N
Joint pain	Tumor/mass, infection, avascular necrosis	MRI, CT	Y
Joint pain	SLAP, labral	MRI	Arthro
Joint pain	Tendon tear, ligament tear	MRI	N
Spine			
Activity-related back or leg pain in a child or adolescent (<18)		MRI	N
Arm/leg pain greater than neck/back pain, hip or stenosis		MRI, CT	N
Boney or post-surgery abnormalities		CT, MRI	Y
Evaluated neuronal axis in a child or adolescent with atypical scoliosis, abnormal gait		MRI	Y
Extensive metal fusion hardware		CT	N
Major or progressive neurological symptoms		MRI	Y
Myelopathy or Cauda Equina		MRI	Y
Neck or back pain with suspected tumor or infection		MRI	Y
Neck or back pain, uncontrolled or unresponsive to conservative treatment		MRI	N
Suspected or known MS		MRI	Y
Trauma with fracture detection/characterization		CT	N
Trauma with neurological/myelopathic symptoms		MRI	Y
Vertebral compression fracture in an elderly patient for characterization		MRI	Y