What will I see?
When you get to the MRI room, you will meet someone called an MRI technologist. You will also see the MRI machine, like in the picture above. Some kids think the camera looks a lot like a spaceship or a train tunnel. What do you think it looks like? During your MRI, there is a light in the tunnel but there isn’t much to look at. This is a nice time to close your eyes and think relaxing thoughts. Some kids think about a beach, floating on a cloud, or a vacation they’ve been on. Other kids fall asleep. What do you want to think about?

What will I hear?
During your MRI, you will hear loud knocking noises and clicking sounds. They will give you ear plugs so it is not too loud. During this part, it is important to stay very still.

What will I feel?
When your MRI begins, you will feel the bed move inside the “tunnel” where the camera is going to take your picture. Since you need to lie very still, the bed moves for you. If you are having an MRI of your head, you also get to wear a helmet. A seat belt will be put around your tummy to help remind you to stay still. Some kids will be given contrast (a liquid to help the doctor see your organs better) towards the end of the pictures. This is given to you through an I.V., which is a small plastic straw that sits in your vein.

Practice tips
Try lying down on your bed or couch for five minutes. Have your mom or dad keep track of the time. Do this about 5 to 10 times with a short break in between. If you are having an MRI of your head, do this with a helmet on. While you are doing this, you can make up a relaxing story to think of during the real MRI. If you’d like to listen to actual MRI sounds, you can search on the internet for “MRI sounds” to find a website. You may want to turn up the volume when listening and practicing lying still.

Parent tips
In most cases you will be able to stay with your child during their MRI scan. Before entering, you will be screened by the technologist to make sure you can enter the room. If you choose not to go into the MRI room, a Child Life Specialist may be available to be with your child for support. Your child may be able to listen to music or a story on CD; you may bring it in case.

Reminder
It is important to stay very still during the MRI procedure for a clear picture. For additional ideas or support during IV start or MRI scan, please call Child Life at (608) 890-7888 or (608) 890-8096. You may also ask the MRI staff to page a Child Life Specialist.