

Open Wide and Say MRI

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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Anyone who has undergone Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) for a medical diagnosis has had to deal with the confined space of the machine. An MRI is a painless test that uses a magnetic field and radio waves to produce detailed pictures of your body's organs and structures.

A traditional MRI scanner has a center bore of about 23.5 inches. If a patient is claustrophobic or is a larger individual, a traditional MRI may not be an option.

OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria has added a new wide-bore MRI to its fleet at the Center for Health – Route 91. The wide-bore offers four more inches – 27.5 total – for a patient's comfort. The MRI is part of a new caring suite, which also offers soothing lights and calming sounds, all in an effort to improve a patient's experience.

"There's a definite need when it comes to a patient's needs in terms of their ability to be in tight spaces - claustrophobia, body habitus, size, things like that - that we have to provide options that truly meets their needs. The caring suite really focuses in on patients who need a calming effect when they come in for their exam, so the mood lighting and sound it really does help with that. And just the overall increase in diameter of the bore of the tunnel really allows us to treat a wider range of patients, ones that we might not have been able to otherwise," explains Phil Baer, Director of Outpatient Diagnostic Services, OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center.

Just how big of a problem is the confined space of an MRI for patients? About 10% of patients each month at OSF reschedule their MRIs because they cannot complete them.

The wide-bore MRI also offers improved technology which provides enhanced imaging with lower scan times – a win-win for both the patient and physician, especially for diagnosing conditions such as a stroke.

"One of the benefits through implementation of this technology is decreased scan time. By upgrading our software and hardware here with a new MRI suite, the actual MRI scan time is probably going to be about 10 to 15 minutes less on the new equipment than what we were currently using, so that's a definite benefit when it comes to being in a confined space," said Baer.

Additionally, the Center for Health Route 91 caring suite supports the breast MRI program. Because of the new technology, the Breast Center was able to expand its high risk breast cancer screening program. The new MRI has specialized coils that offer comfort to the patient along with best viewing options for the reading radiologist. The program includes the ability to do biopsies, if necessary, in the suite when the patient comes in and treat them in the same day.

Another wide-bore MRI caring suite is expected to be installed in Peoria at the Glen Park location this spring.

Find additional information about the imaging services offered [here](#).