

# Sri Lanka's first patient-friendly Open Magnet MRI at Hemas Hospital

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Hemas Hospitals has revolutionised medical imaging in the country with the introduction of Sri Lanka's first-ever Open Magnet MRI at its flagship hospital in Wattala.

"This Open Magnet MRI solves one of the biggest challenges in medical imaging today. It combines the power of MRI technology in a comfortable and spacious design that accommodates the needs of all patients, including large patients and those suffering from claustrophobia and anxiety. Given its wide and spacious opening, it is also ideal for imaging extremities of patients suffering from sports injuries and orthopaedic problems whereby even patients with bent limbs can be accommodated in the machine", Director, Medical Services at Hemas Hospitals Dr. Aruna Rabel said.

Doctors estimate that more than 10 percent of all exams using traditional MRI systems are abandoned due to patient anxiety and claustrophobia. The conventional MRI with its narrow, tube-like opening cannot accommodate large patients and is very claustrophobic. Patients are thus left with the only option of getting the scan done under anaesthesia, sedation or just giving up.

"Being neither scary, nor noisy and dark, the open MRI affords a patient-friendly experience where a relative or family member can even stay near the patient talking to him while the scan is being done. Furthermore the patient can even read a book while the scan is being done thus bringing in a whole new dimension to the experience", Dr. Rabel added.

Chairman of Hemas Hospitals Murtaza Esufally said that the introduction of the new Open Magnet MRI was in keeping with the Hospital's patient-centric ethos. "Not only does this raise the bar of medical imaging in the country, but it also brings in a totally new, refreshing and patient-friendly experience to the whole MRI exercise. The feedback we've so far got from patients has been very positive and encouraging, and this certainly does augur well for the future of medical imaging in this country".

Yusuf Jeevunjee who recently underwent the experience says, "I had a sports injury on my right shoulder, which gave me considerable pain. X-rays could not identify the cause. I was asked by my doctor to do an MRI scan, but as I am very claustrophobic, I was avoiding it for a long time and the pain was getting worse. I heard about the Open Magnet MRI at Hemas Hospital, and decided to try it out. The room was very comfortable and the wide space in the magnet tunnel made it a lot easier to bear. The technicians were also very patient-sympathetic.

The whole scanning process took about 40 minutes, and I got through it quite comfortably. My doctor also mentioned that the clarity of the imaging was the best he had seen for a long time". Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), a diagnostic tool that scans the body using powerful magnets, has revolutionised modern medicine in the three decades since it was introduced. The scanners can find tumors and other medical problems before they become deadly. The MRI utilises computers and magnetic fields to provide safe and non-invasive images of the human anatomy, and, unlike X-rays and CT scans, the MRI uses no radiation. The MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scanning is an advanced diagnostic tool which uses magnetic fields and radio frequencies to create images of the human body. An MRI is often used to study blood vessels, nerves, muscles, ligaments, bones, and other tissues in the body; the detail of the study can be quite incredible. An MRI is often used to evaluate the possibility of injuries to ligaments and tendons. Problems in the spine, such as a disc herniation, and, masses and tumors within soft tissues can also be evaluated with MRI.

The Hemas Wattala Hospital, the flagship of Hemas Hospitals, is a family hospital which provides patient-centric, affordable and high quality health services. The state-of-the-art facility has 100 beds, over a 100 Specialist Consultants, 05 operating theatres, MRI and CT Scanning, 24/7 lab, ICU and Emergency services.