What is a Small Bowel MRI?
This is a way to examine your small bowel without using x-rays, but using MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) instead. MRI combines a powerful magnet with a sophisticated computer to detect small changes in the body’s own magnetic field and give detailed images of any part of the human body. A liquid mixture is given to you to drink to distend the small bowel so that it can be seen better on the scan.

Why do I need a Small Bowel MRI?
The decision to carry out a small bowel MRI is made by the clinical team responsible for your care and the Radiologist, who will have decided that this is the best way to examine your small bowel. You will have the opportunity for your opinion to be considered and if after discussion with your doctor you do not want the procedure carried out, you can decide against it.

Where will the procedure take place?
The procedure will take place in the MRI department.

Who will be doing the Small Bowel MRI?
A specially trained Radiographer with special expertise in using MRI equipment.

How do I prepare for a Small Bowel MRI?
For this examination to be successful it is important that your bowel is as clear and well prepared as possible. A low residue diet should be followed for the 2 days before your examination. It is important you follow the instructions set out exactly:

Diet to be followed for the 2 days before your scan:

- **Breakfast** – one or two slices of white toast or bread with a scraping of butter or margarine, **no marmalade or jam**.
- **Lunch** – white fish or chicken and boiled potatoes, no vegetables. Clear jelly OR white bread with chicken in a sandwich. Clear jelly.
- **Supper** – same as lunch.
- You may suck boiled sweets or mints.
- You can drink as much fluid as you like. Try to drink clear water, squash or fizzy pop.

Diabetic Patients Only:

For patients taking insulin please see Appendix A

For patients taking tablets and non-insulin injections please see Appendix B

Your appointment should be scheduled between 9.00 am and 10.00 am. If you receive an appointment that is later than this, please contact the MRI Department as soon as possible. Those on medication should bring their medication and something to eat after the scan.
What actually happens during a Small Bowel MRI?

Before the scan:

When you come for your examination please tell us about any of the following:

- Any heart problems (e.g. very fast heart rate, angina, heart attack within the past 2 weeks).
- An allergy or previous allergic reaction to Buscopan.
- Gut blockage problems or a totally inactive gut (known as paralytic ileus).
- Megacolon (a very enlarged bowel).
- Narrow angle glaucoma.
- Myasthenia gravis
- An enlarged prostate, with urinary retention (difficulty/pain passing urine).
- Diabetes.
- Kidney problems.
- You are pregnant, likely to become pregnant in the very near future or are breast-feeding.
- Any medication you are taking, including herbal remedies.
- Any allergies you have.

You will first be asked to change into an examination gown. You will also need to remove jewellery (wedding rings need not be removed), hearing aids, metal dentures, credit cards, skin patches, body piercings, spectacles, any loose metal objects and possibly eye make-up (mascara and eye liner contain iron).

You will be given a special drink of one litre of Mannitol which has to be drunk quickly over 20-25 minutes (approximately one cup every 6 minutes). Once you have finished the drink, you will be taken to the scanning room.

For your own safety, MRI staff will check through the ‘safety questionnaire’ that you will have completed. This may be checked several times.

The Scan:
The radiographer will position you on a comfortable couch. You will need to remain still whilst in the scanner.

We will need to insert a small needle in your arm to give you a small amount of a dye (contrast agent) to make the blood vessels in your abdomen visible. We will also need to give a bowel relaxing injection (Buscopan) through the needle in your arm; this helps to reduce the movement of your bowel and make the images clearer for a diagnosis to be made.

Will it hurt?
There may be slight discomfort when the injection is given. The scan itself is painless.
How long will it take?
The scan will take approximately 30 minutes. You are advised to allow up to 2 hours in the MRI Department for the examination to be completed.

What happens afterwards?
Once the examination is completed you may return to your normal diet. The mixture you drink is a harmless liquid; however occasionally it can cause loose motions for a day or two.

The images need to be examined in detail by a Radiologist, so we cannot give you the results straightaway. Your doctor should have told you how you will get the results. Please ask a member of staff if you do not receive this information.

Who can I contact for further information?
This leaflet should have answered most of your questions, but remember this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors looking after you. We hope that you have found this information useful. If you have any questions, or you are worried about anything, please contact the Imaging Department on (01246) 512627.

Are there any risks or complications:
This is generally a very safe procedure but there are a few risks and complications of which you should be aware.

Buscopan is a safe and widely used medication that reduces bowel spasm in x-ray examinations. However, if you are experiencing other medical problems there may be occasions when its use is not recommended. You may experience some blurring of vision after the injection but the effects of Buscopan are short-lived and last about one hour. **You are advised not to drive until any effects have worn off or until one hour after the injectin of Buscopan.**

In the very rare event that following the examination you develop painful, blurred vision in one or both eyes, you must attend hospital immediately for assessment.