

4.1 Principles of MRI

Nuclei, Excitation, Relaxation

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Outline

- What nuclei are MR active?
 - Hydrogen (fat & water)
 - Other Nuclei
- Why are they MR active?
 - Mass Number
- How do they behave in the magnet?
- Excitation
 - RF excitation
- Radiofrequency Pulses
 - Larmor Frequency
- Relaxation
 - T1
 - T2

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Slide # 2

Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the attendee should...

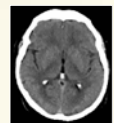
1. Learn the various nuclei that are MR active
2. Understand why certain nuclei are MR active
3. Realize how nuclei behave in the presence of the magnetic field.
4. Understand Excitation
5. Understand Relaxation
6. Learn T1 & T2 weighted imaging

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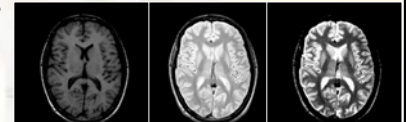
Slide # 3

What Do We Image?

- What do we image ... with CT?
 - Soft tissues?
 - Bones?
- What do we image with MRI?
 - Soft tissues?
 - Bones?



Axial CT



T1

PD

T2

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What's in an Atom?

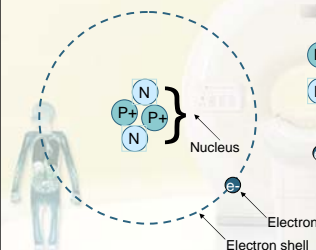
Atoms have a nucleus

P^+ Protons (+ positive charge)

N Neutrons (neutral)

Orbiting the nucleus

e^- Electrons (- negative charge)



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The Nucleus, What Counts?

Mass Number

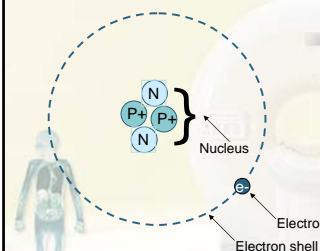
P^+ Number of Protons

Plus (+)

N Number of Neutrons

Atomic Number

P^+ Number of Protons



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What Elements are MR Active?

- Periodic Table
- Elements
- Unique Atomic Structure
- Odd Mass Number
- Hydrogen
- Phosphorous
- Others?

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Proton Imaging

Mass Number
 P^+ Number of Protons Plus (+)
 N Number of Neutrons
 = 1

Atomic Number
 P^+ Number of Protons
 = 1

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Hydrogen Imaging

- The human body is roughly 75% water
- Water is H_2O
- Hydrogen in Water
- Hydrogen in Fat
- CH_3

T1 Image
Water is dark
Fat is bright

PD Image
water / bright
fat / bright

T2 Image
water / bright
fat / darker

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Why do fat & water appear differently?

- Hydrogen in Water
- Water Molecule H_2O
- Hydrogen in Fat
- Fat Molecule CH_3

Sagittal Cervical & Thoracic Spine
 T1 Image
Fat is bright
Water is dark

T2 Image
Fat is bright
Water is dark

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Before there was imaging... Spectroscopy

- Each chemical has a different Frequency like (fat & water)
- The location of the peak tells what chemical
- The area under the peak tells how much of that chemical
- The difference in frequency is known as Chemical Shift
- MR Spectrum displays Chemical Shift
- The study of the spectrum is known as Spectroscopy

Water H_2O

Fat CH_3

chemical shift

MR Spectrum

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Suppression of fat and/or water...

Fat

Silicone Implant

Water H_2O

Fat CH_3

chemical shift = 3.5 ppm

MR Spectrum

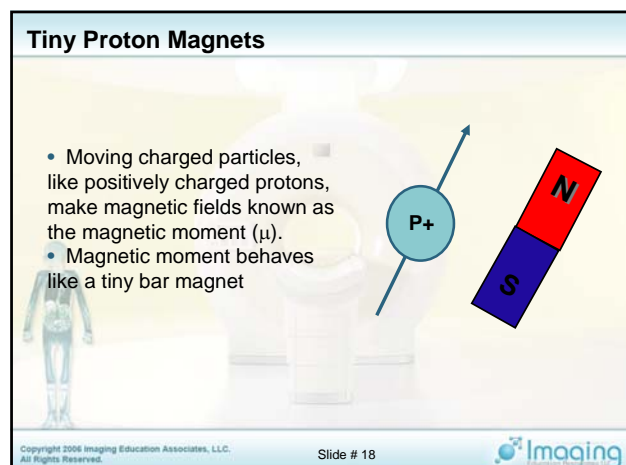
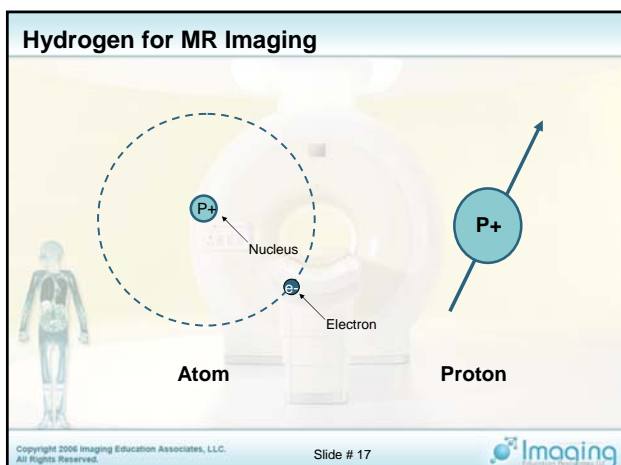
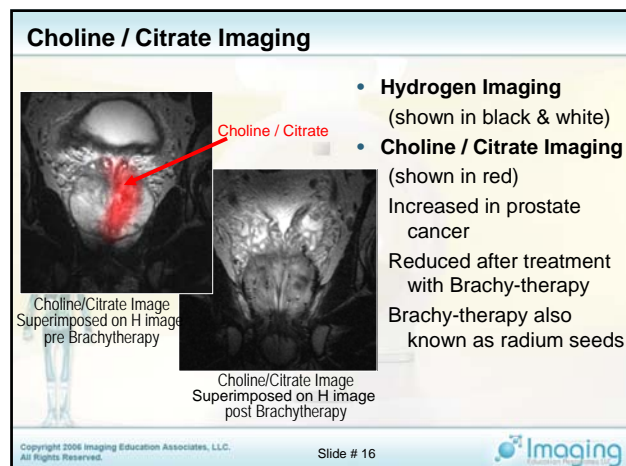
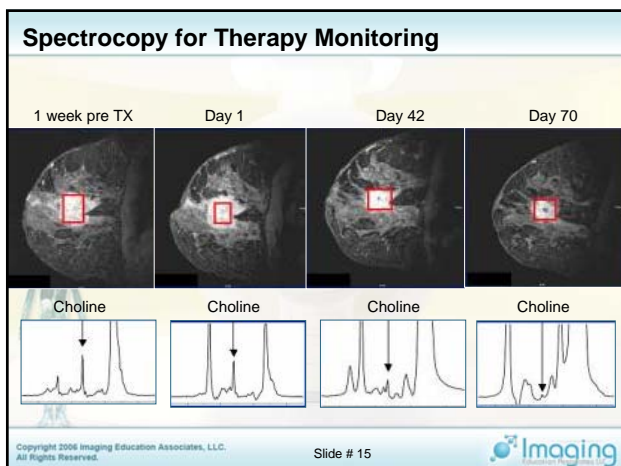
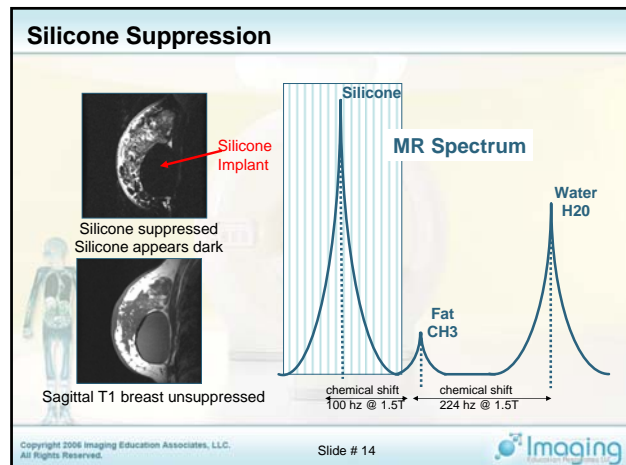
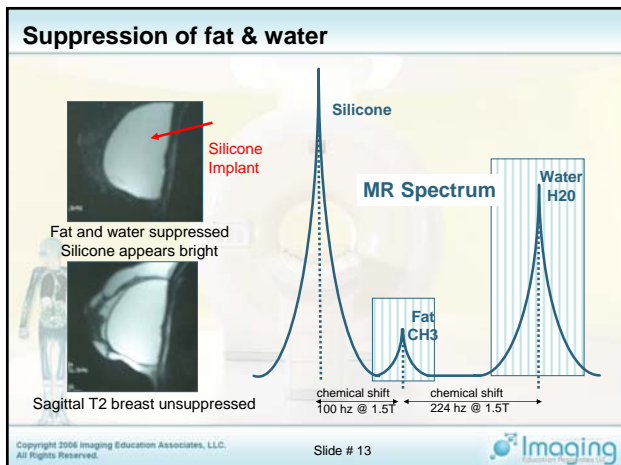
3.5 ppm...

- @ 1.5T = 220 Hz
- @ 3.0T = 440 Hz
- @ 0.3T = 73 Hz

Sagittal T2 breast unsuppressed

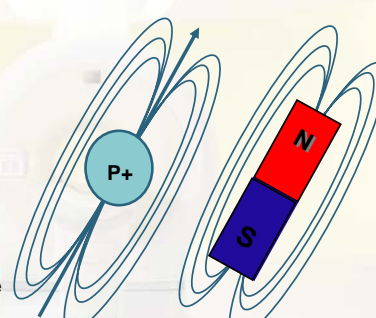
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The Magnetic Moment

- Bipolar magnets
 - Magnetic moments
 - Bar magnets
- Two Poles
 - North pole
 - South pole
- Magnetic field lines run from the south pole to the north pole

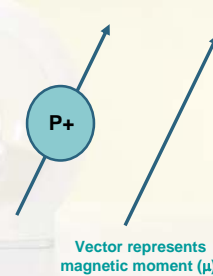


Magnetic field lines

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Vector... Magnetic Moment

- The magnetic moment is represented by a vector

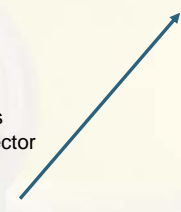


Vector represents magnetic moment (μ).

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Review Vectors

- The vector has two properties
 - Magnitude
the length of the vector
 - Direction
the "direction" to which it points
- The vector can be added to another vector



Vector

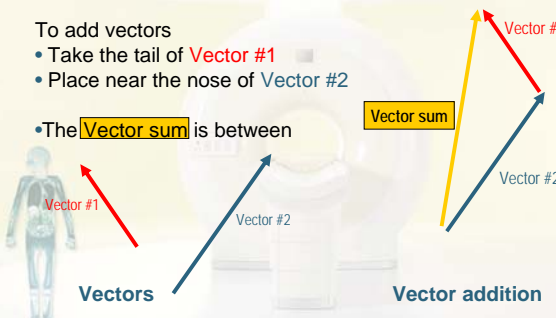
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Vector Addition

To add vectors

- Take the tail of **Vector #1**
- Place near the nose of **Vector #2**

The **Vector sum** is between



Vector #1

Vector #2

Vector sum

Vectors

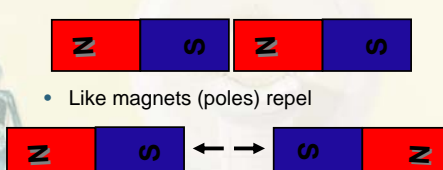
Vector addition

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Magnet to Magnet

What happens when two magnets are together

- Opposite Magnets (poles) attract
- Like magnets (poles) repel



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Outline

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Magnets in a Magnetic Field

Opposite Magnets (poles) attract

Like Magnets (poles) Repel

Direction of the magnetic field

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Imaging

Direction of the Main Magnetic Field

When the patient is in the MR imager

- Some H protons "attract" to the magnetic field
 - Align with B_0
 - Low energy
- Some H protons "repel" the magnetic field direction
 - Oppose B_0
 - High energy

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Protons in a Magnetic Field

- There are roughly 500,000 protons in a drop of water
- When the patient is placed within the magnetic field, protons either
 - align or
 - oppose B_0

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Imaging

Classical Method

Protons in the magnetic field

- Low energy
 - Attract
 - Align
- High energy
 - "Repel"
 - Oppose

Bo

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Imaging

Precession

precessional path

spin

- Remember, protons are moving (spinning) charged particles
 - Known as spins
- Protons, align at an angle to the magnetic field
 - The angle is 37°
- Because protons spin, on an angle, they begin to wobble or precess
 - Wobble or precess like a spinning top
 - Precess at a specific rate or frequency known as the Precessional Frequency or Larmor Frequency
 - Precess along a path known as the precessional path

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Imaging

Cartesian Coordinate System

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Z axis

X axis

Y axis

precessional path

- Low energy
 - Parallel Spin Up
- High energy
 - Anti-parallel Spin Down

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Imaging

Protons to Vectors

Protons are replaced by vectors on the Cartesian coordinates

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Thermal Equilibrium

Immediately after the patient is placed within the magnetic field, there are an even number of spins in the high & low energy states

After a few seconds, there are more spins in the low energy state. This condition is known as thermal equilibrium

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Vector Sum

In this case, vector sum is zero
For example... vector #1 + #6 cancel

Vectors #3 + #4 cancel

Vectors #2 + #5 cancel

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Net Magnetization (Mz)

In this case, vector sum is Non Zero
For example... vector #1 + #6 cancel and Vectors #3 + #5 cancel

Vectors #2 + #4 Add to form the Net Magnetization (Mz)

Vector sum
Net magnetization
Mz – magnetization along the "Z" axis

The net magnetization is responsible for MR images

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Mz and Field Strength

As field strength increases, more spins in line, greater net magnetization, higher image signal.

1.5T Image

3.0T Image

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Outline

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 - T2

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How is excitation achieved?

- Alignment
 - Protons in the magnetic field
 - Thermal equilibrium
- RF Pulse
 - Larmor Frequency
- Resonance



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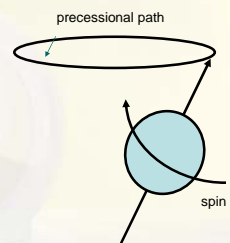


Precession

- Remember, protons are moving (spinning) charged particles, known as spins
- Protons, align at an angle to the magnetic field
- Because protons spin, on an angle, they begin to wobble or precess
 - Wobble or precess like a spinning top
 - Precess at a specific rate, or frequency known as the

Precessional Frequency or the Larmor Frequency

- This frequency describes the energy that keeps the spins in thermal equilibrium
- It is this energy that can "knock" the spins from thermal equilibrium (excite the spins)

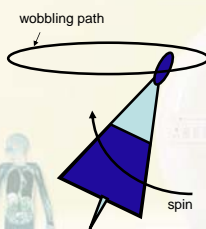


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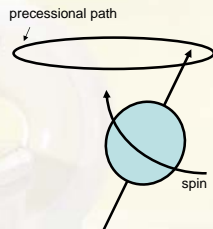
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Wobbling Top & Precession



- A Top wobbles because of
- The weight of the top
 - The rate of spin (how fast it spins)
 - The gravity of the earth



- A proton precesses (in the magnet) because of
- The magnetic moment of the proton
 - The rate of spin (spin angular momentum)
 - The magnetic field strength

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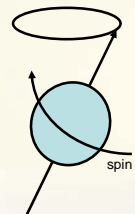


Precessional frequency

- We can determine the energy required to "excite" the spins
- In order to calculate this energy we need several components
 - The magnetic moment of the proton
 - The spin angular momentum of the proton
 - The field strength of the magnet

Precessional Frequency

- This frequency describes the energy that keeps the spins in thermal equilibrium
- It is this energy that can "knock" the spins from thermal equilibrium



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Larmor Frequency

In order to calculate the precessional (Larmor) frequency

- The magnetic moment of the proton
- The spin angular momentum of the proton

Gyro-magnetic ratio = γ
Magneto-gyric ratio = γ

- The field strength of the magnet

Magnetic field strength = B_0

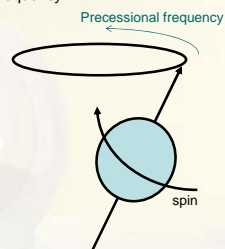
This is known as the Larmor equation

$$\omega_0 = B_0 \gamma$$

Larmor or Precessional
Frequency = ω_0

Magnetic field strength = B_0

Gyro-magnetic ratio = γ
Magneto-gyric ratio = γ



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Units of Measure for Frequency

Precessional Path



The Larmor Equation

calculates the precessional frequency

- Precessional Frequency or Larmor frequency
 - The rate at which the spins wobble, or precess
- Wobble or precess in cycles per second
 - One cycle is once around the precessional path
 - One cycle is one sine wave
 - One cycle per second = 1 Hertz (Hz)

– MHz, megahertz = 1,000,000 cycles per second

One cycle

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Larmor Equation

A trick to remember the Larmor Equation

Whoa Boy!

One can imagine that a proton wobbles pretty rapidly, hence whoa!

$$\omega_0 = B_0 \gamma$$

Here's the actual equation

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Gyromagnetic Ratio

The gyro-magnetic ratio is constant for each chemical.



$$\omega_0 = B_0 \gamma$$

Frequency = ω_0

Magnetic field strength = B_0

Gyro-magnetic ratio = γ
Magneto-gyric ratio = γ

Gyromagnetic ratio (γ) or the Magneto-gyric ratio (γ) for several chemicals

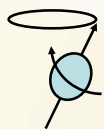
1H (hydrogen)	42.6 MHz/T
19F (fluorine)	40.1 MHz/T
31P (phosphorous)	17.2 MHz/T

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Calculating the Larmor Frequency



$$\omega_0 = B_0 \gamma$$

γ for 1H (hydrogen) = 42.6 MHz/T
If the Field strength (B_0) is 1.0 Tesla

Then...

$$\omega_0 = (1.0T) \times (42.6 \text{ MHz/T})$$

$$\omega_0 = 42.6 \text{ MHz (Megahertz)}$$

γ for 1H (hydrogen) = 42.6 MHz/T
If the Field strength (B_0) is 1.5 Tesla

Then...

$$\omega_0 = (1.5T) \times (42.6 \text{ MHz/T})$$

$$\omega_0 = 63.9 \text{ MHz (Megahertz)}$$

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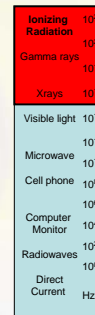


Radiofrequency Energy?

Do we use radiation in MR?

- Electromagnetic spectrum
- X-rays
 - High energy
 - Ionizing radiation
- MR Radiofrequency
 - Low energy
 - Non-ionizing

At 1.5T the frequency is roughly 64 MHz.
In most cities, channel 3 broadcasts at roughly 64 Mhz.



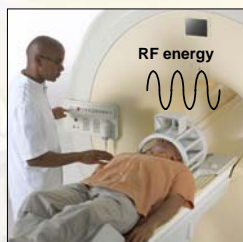
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Resonance

- Once the Larmor frequency is calculated
- Spins can be excited by the radiofrequency pulse – at the Larmor frequency
- If the RF energy matches the precessional frequency of the spins...
- Resonance is achieved

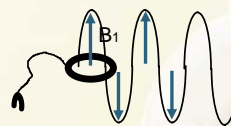


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RF Transmitter Configurations



RF Transmitters



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Excitation

As the result of the RF pulse...
 Net magnetization moves from Mz to Mxy
 Spins achieve phase coherence
 Some low energy spins
 - absorb energy
 - enter the high energy state

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Net Magnetization (Mz)

In this case, vector sum is Non Zero
 For example... vector #1 + #6 cancel and Vectors #3 + #5 cancel
 Vectors #2 + #4 Add to form the Net Magnetization (Mz)

Vector sum
 Net magnetization
 Mz - magnetization along the "Z" axis

The net magnetization is responsible for MR images

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Vector Sum

Vector sum
 Net magnetization
 Mxy - magnetization along the XY plane

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Excitation

As the result of the RF pulse...
 Net magnetization moves from Mz to Mxy
 Spins achieve phase coherence
 Some low energy spins
 - absorb energy
 - enter the high energy state

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Image Contrast Parameters

T1WI	PDWI	T2WI
Short TR	Long TR	Long TR
Short TE	Short TE	Long TE
Bright fat	Bright fat & water	Bright water

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- How do they behave in the magnet?
- Excitation
 - RF excitation
- Radiofrequency Pulses
 - Larmor Frequency
- Relaxation
 - Signal Induction
 - T1
 - T2

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RF Receiver Configurations

MR Signal FID

RF Receiver coil

TMJ coils (3" round)

Spine coil, linear array

5" round linear coil

Chest coil, volume array

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Imaging

Faraday's Law of Induction

- Drag a magnet across a conductor, a voltage is created (induced) within the conductor

- $\frac{dB}{dt} = \frac{dV}{dt}$
Change of magnet divided by time = voltage
- $\frac{\Delta B}{\Delta t} = \Delta V$

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Imaging

Fourier Transformation

coil

FID Time domain

Spectrum Frequency domain

Water

Fat

F_t

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Imaging

Converting MR Signal

White light

prism

Light spectrum

Free Induction Decay (FID)

MR Spectrum

F_t

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Imaging

Chemical shift

- Each chemical has a different Frequency like (fat & water)
- Parts per million (PPM)
- Fat / water 3.5 ppm
- @ 1.5T = 224 Hz
- Varies with field strength

Fat CH3

Water H2O

chemical shift

MR Spectrum

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Imaging

Imaging and Spectroscopy

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Imaging

Excitation Review

As the result of the RF pulse...
 Net magnetization moves from Mz to Mxy
 Spins achieve phase coherence... all get together...
 Some low energy spins
 - absorb energy
 - enter the high energy state... some get high

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Relaxation

As the result of the RF pulse...
 Net magnetization moves from Mz to Mxy
 Spins achieve phase coherence... all get together...
 Some low energy spins
 - absorb energy
 - enter the high energy state... some get high

Relaxation
 get out of phase- get apart... T2
 return to longitudinal axis- some get low... T1

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Relaxation...T2* Decay

RF pulse

Mxy

coil

T2* decay

Axial T2* Brain Image

In phase

Partially dephased

Completely dephased

Mx,y = transverse magnetization

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T2* & T2 Decay

T2 decay

T2*

Equation for ...T2*
 $T2 + T2' = T2^*$

FID

Axial T2* Brain

Axial T2 Brain

echo

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Is a susceptibility artifact always a bad thing??

T2 decay

T2*

FID

Axial T2* Brain

Axial T2 Brain

echo

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Spin Echo Imaging

Timing diagram

90°

180°

TR

FID

TE

echo

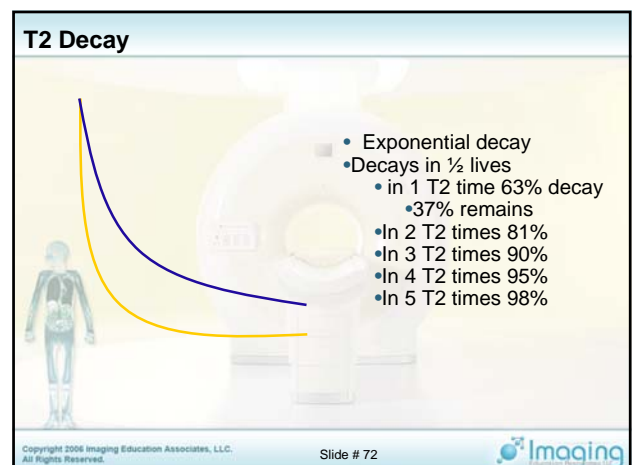
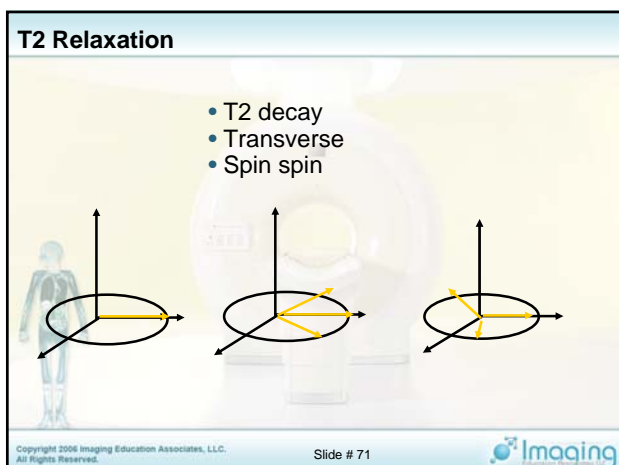
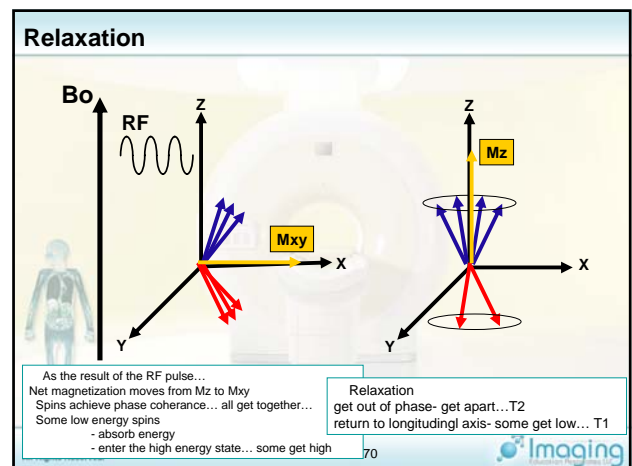
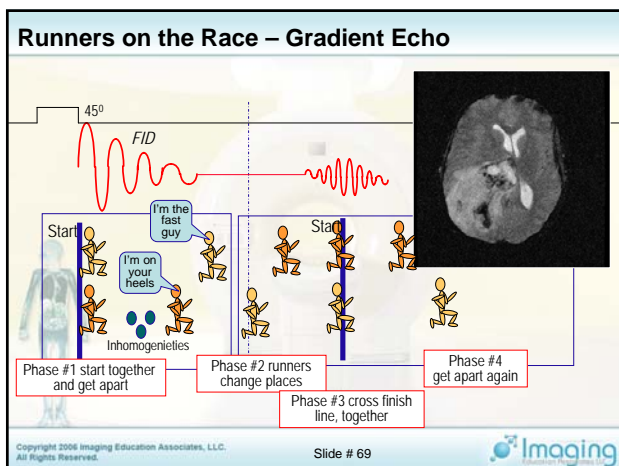
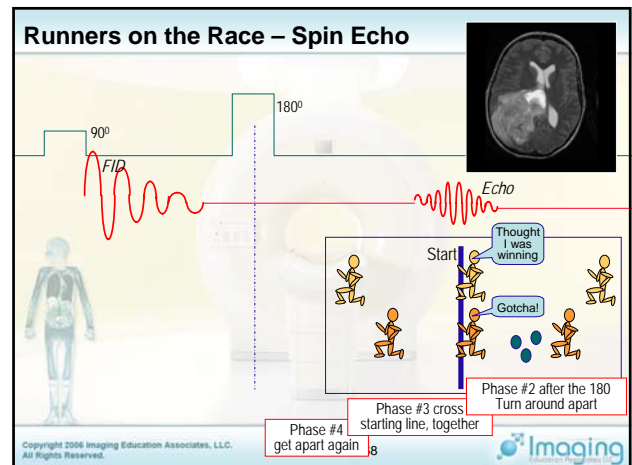
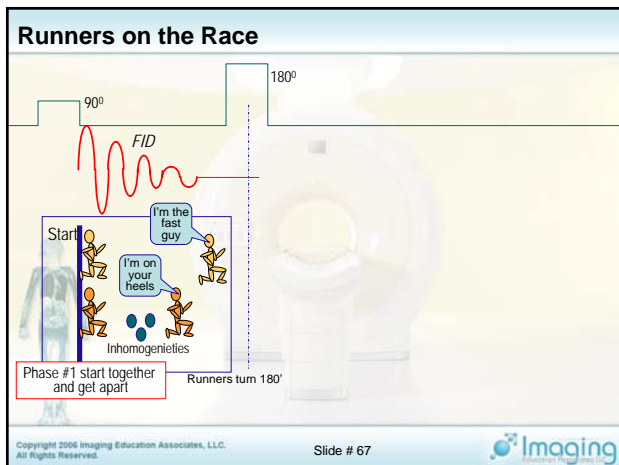
180° RF pulse

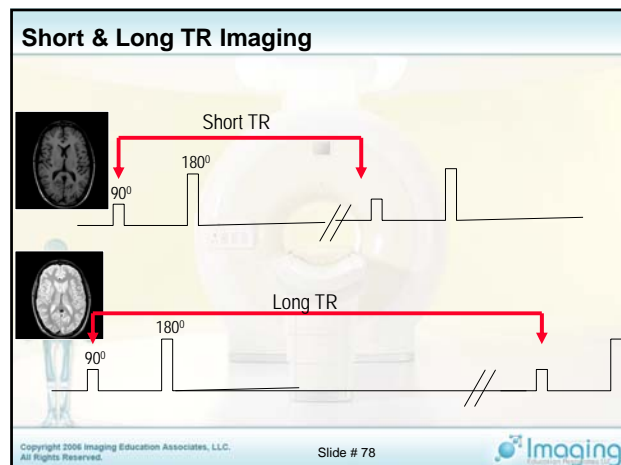
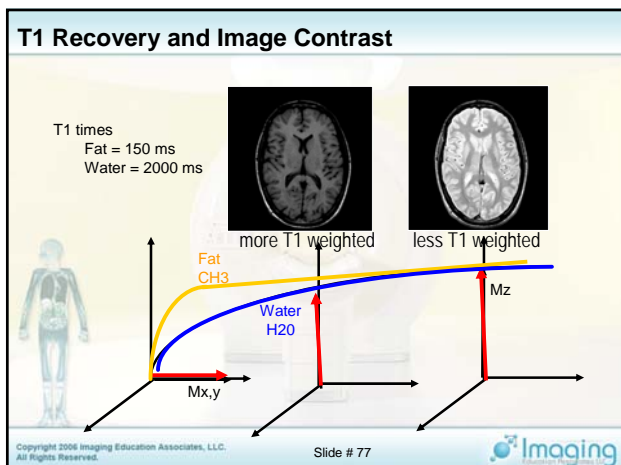
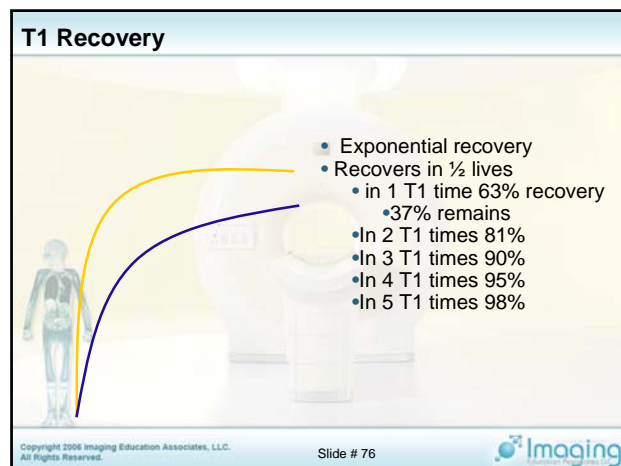
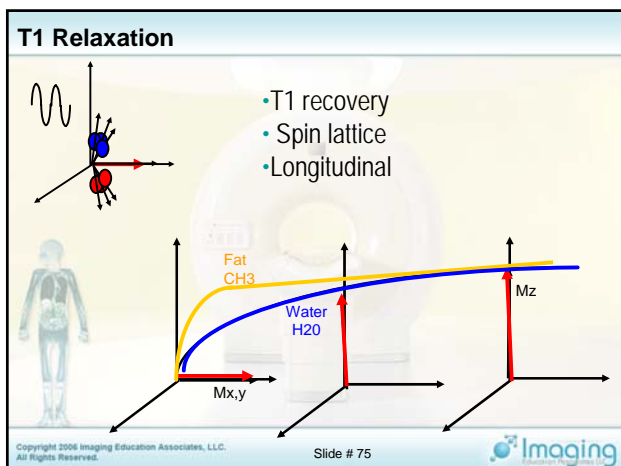
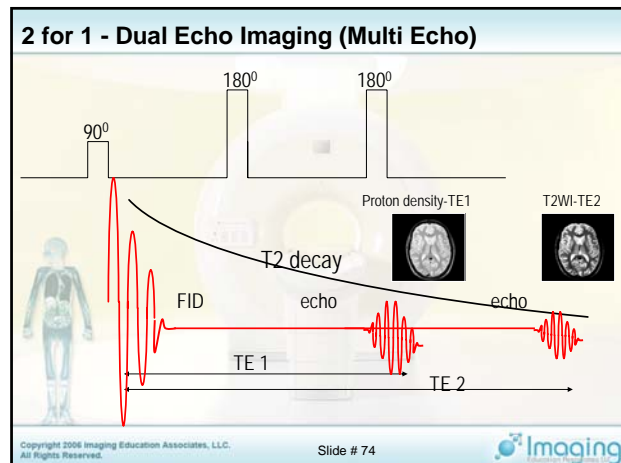
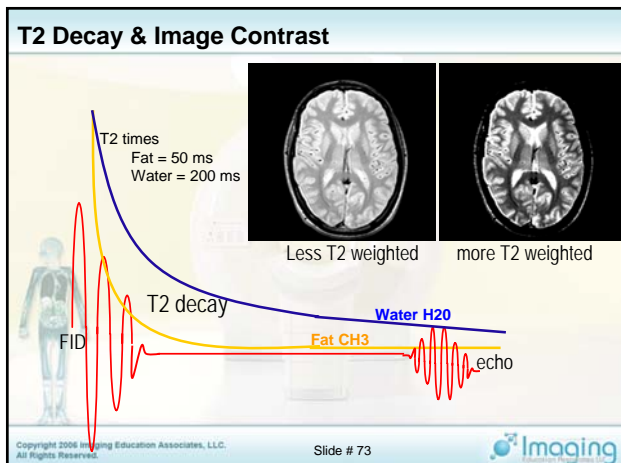
Axial GE abdomen Image

Axial SE abdomen Image

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A Few Fun Facts about T1 & T2

We cannot change....
T1 recovery
T2 decay
unless we change
Field strength
Temperature
or Add contrast agents!



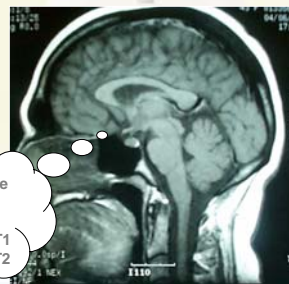
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A Few Fun Facts about TR & TE

We can change
TR & TE
And...
TR goes with T1
TE goes with T2



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A Few Fun Facts about T1

T1 times at
1.5T
Are in the
neighborhood
of ...
2000 ms for
water
150 ms for fat



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A Few Fun Facts about T2

T2 times at
1.5T
Are in the
neighborhood
of ...
200 ms for
water
50 ms for fat



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A Few Fun Facts about Image Contrast

We cannot change....
T1 recovery
T2 decay
unless we change
Field strength
Temperature
or Add contrast agents!

T1 times at
1.5T
Are in the
neighborhood
of ...
2000 ms for
water
150 ms for fat

We can change
TR & TE
And...
TR goes with T1
TE goes with T2

T2 times at
1.5T
Are in the
neighborhood
of ...
200 ms for
water
50 ms for fat



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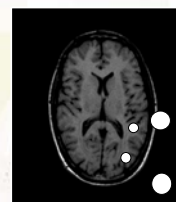
Slide # 83



Let's Make a T1 Image

T1WI

Short TR (500 ms)
Short TE (20 ms)
Bright fat



T1 times at
1.5T
Are in the
neighborhood
of ...
2000 ms for
water
150 ms for fat

We can change
TR & TE
And...
TR goes with T1
TE goes with T2

T2 times at
1.5T
Are in the
neighborhood
of ...
200 ms for
water
50 ms for fat

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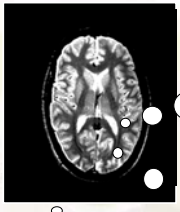
Slide # 84



Let's Make a T2 Image

T2WI

Long TR (4000 ms)
Long TE (100 ms)
Bright water



T1 times at 1.5T
Are in the neighborhood of ...
2000 ms for water
150 ms for fat

T2 times at 1.5T
Are in the neighborhood of ...
200 ms for water
50 ms for fat

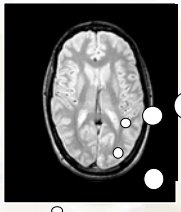
We can change TR & TE
And...
TR goes with T1
TE goes with T2

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Let's Make a PD Image

PDWI

Long TR (4000 ms)
Short TE (20 ms)
Bright fat & water



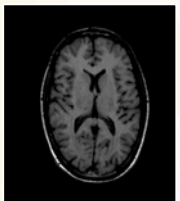
T1 times at 1.5T
Are in the neighborhood of ...
2000 ms for water
150 ms for fat

T2 times at 1.5T
Are in the neighborhood of ...
200 ms for water
50 ms for fat

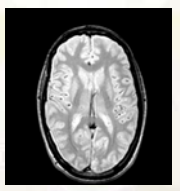
We can change TR & TE
And...
TR goes with T1
TE goes with T2

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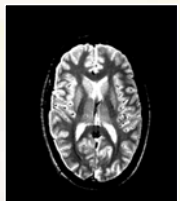
Image Contrast Parameters



T1WI
Short TR
Short TE
Bright fat, short T1 time



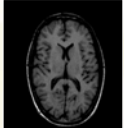
PDWI
Long TR
Short TE
Bright fat & water



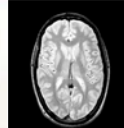
T2WI
Long TR
Long TE
Bright water, long T2 time

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What is a Pulse Sequence?



T1 Weighted Image
Spin echo family
Longer Scan times
Better quality
SE (TSE) FSE
IR
Fast IR



PD Weighted Image
SE (TSE) FSE
FLAIR
Fast FLAIR
Looks like PD



T2 Weighted Image
SE
FSE
STIR
Fast STIR
Looks like T2

Gradient echo family
Faster Scan times
lower quality
(T1 FFE) GrE spoiled
TOF MRA
Enhanced MRA

(PD FFE) GrE
EPI Flair

T2* Weighted Image
(T2* FFE) GrE
PC MRA
EPI
Perfusion
Diffusion

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Outline

- What nuclei are MR active?
 - Hydrogen (fat & water)
 - Other Nuclei
- Why are they MR active?
 - Mass Number
- How do they behave in the magnet?
- Excitation
 - RF excitation
- Radiofrequency Pulses
 - Larmor Frequency
- Relaxation
 - T1
 - T2

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4.1 Principles of MRI

Nuclei, Excitation, Relaxation

Thank you for your attention!

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