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# Imaging Center gets latest MRI equipment

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One Hastings Imaging Center room was especially drafty this morning as a crew from Howard's Glass removed the window frame, making way for state-of-the-art equipment.

Hastings Imaging Center is in the process of incorporating a brand new Siemens Magnetom Aera 1.5 Tesla Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine from Omaha-based health care equipment provider Cassling.

After the opening was made in the building, a crane lifted the 4.8-ton MRI machine from a flat-bed trailer and placed it onto hydraulic skates next to the opening.

The skates made it possible for the installation crew to push the machine in place, set it up, calibrate it and prepare it for operation.

Cassling officials say the new MRI's greatest attribute is a larger opening for a patient, called Open Bore design. The opening is 70 centimeters, an increase from 60 cm in the previous machine.

"When you think about that from a patient perspective, oftentimes when you here people say they have to go to an MRI, claustrophobia is a big issue because if the patient is anxious about it and uncomfortable, that's going to impact

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LAURA BEAHM/AP

**Crews with Nebraska Crane prepare to move a Siemens Magnetom Aera 1.5 Tesla Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine into the building at Hastings Imaging Center this morning.**

## **MRI: Hastings Imaging Center makes room for latest equipment**

the results," said Lindsay Cosimano, Cassling chief marketing operator. "So, when you have this larger bore, it's greater for the patient. It's also greater for clinical outcomes if the patient's more likely to be still and less likely to have to be sedated in order to go through the exam."

Project manager Jim Withrow said installation will take four or five days, calibra-

tion will take a week to 10 days and then Imaging Center employees will receive training for about a week.

Andy Beer, Cassling vice president of sales, said the 1.5 Tesla magnet in the new MRI machine has the same strength as the Imagining Center's previous machine, but it incorporates the latest technology and has the highest image quality available in the market.

Dedicated coils are placed on the body part to be scanned.

Beer said scan times can now be reduced by 20 percent compared to previous Imagining Center equipment. That change could lead to a more extensive examination.

Previously, a patient might go in for three or four studies of a knee. Now the new MRI machine can do five or six studies in the same amount of time.

"We have a lot of new coils that go on the patient when you scan the patient that's going to provide much higher details so the image quality is going to be greater than it was before," Beer said.

In addition to state-of-the-art, the Aera is also a bit on the rare side.

Beer said the next closest Aera to Hastings is in Scottsbluff.