Imperfections and Artifacts

M219 Principles and Applications of MRI

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Class Business

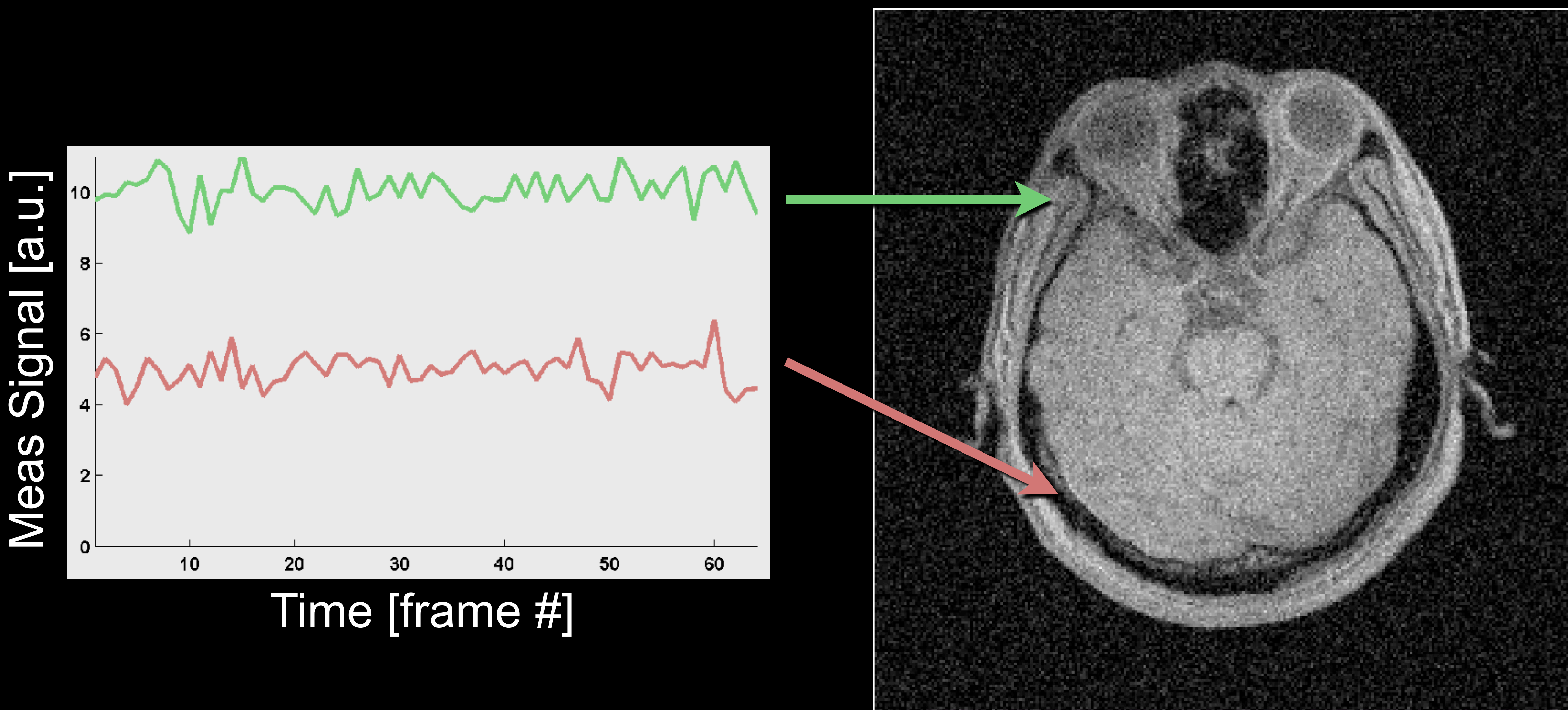
- Syllabus and materials
  - https://mrrl.ucla.edu/pages/m219_2022
- Final exam on 3/16 Wed at 2 pm
  - Bauer Auditorium

Outline

- Noise
- Artifacts
  - Aliasing
  - Gibb’s ringing
  - Noise spikes
  - Chemical shift
  - Motion artifacts
  - Metal artifacts
  - Gradient non-linearity
  - Data clipping
  - RF interference
  - And more …

Noise

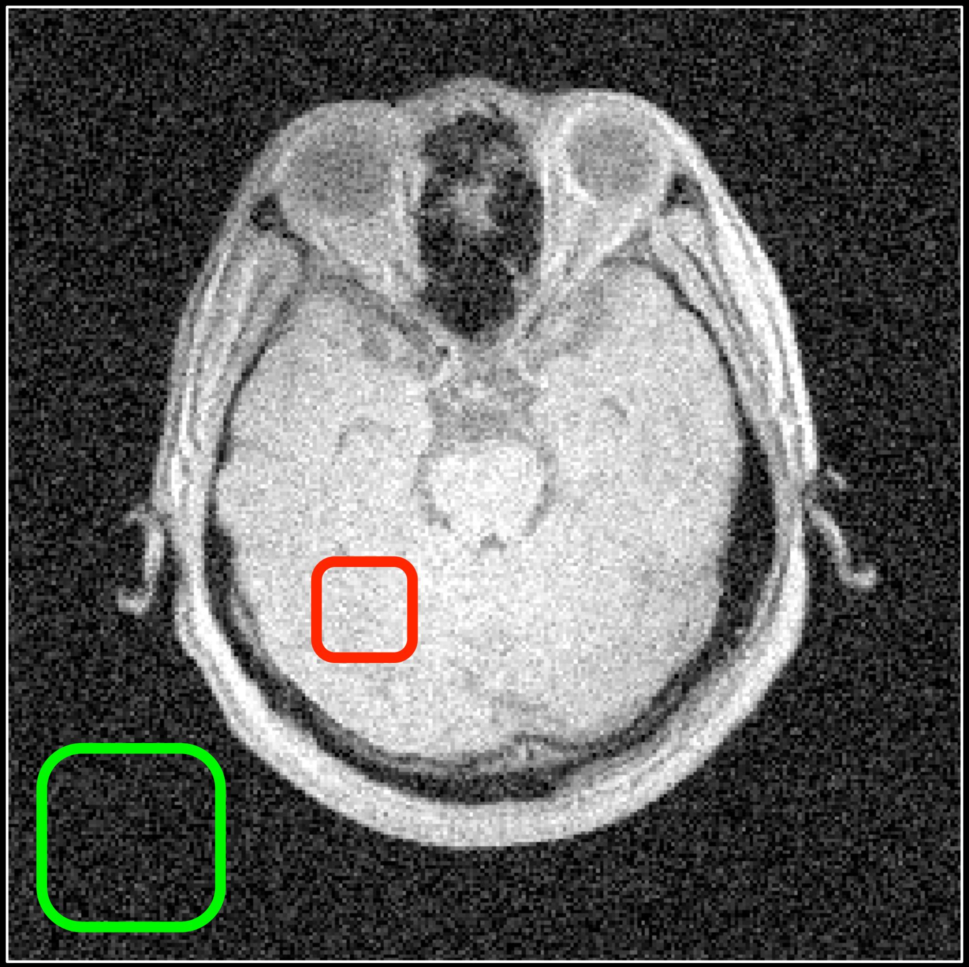
Signal-to-Noise Ratio



SNR = temporal mean(meas) / temporal SD(meas)

Signal-to-Noise Ratio

- **SNR – Signal-to-noise ratio (spatial ROI method)**
  - **Signal – Mean signal intensity in ROI. Assumes:**
    - 1) Tissue homogeneity
    - 2) Noise is only source of variance
  - **Noise – SD of background ROI outside object. Assumes:**
    - 1) Noise is only source of variance



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This (spatial) method of measuring the SNR is widespread, but imperfect.

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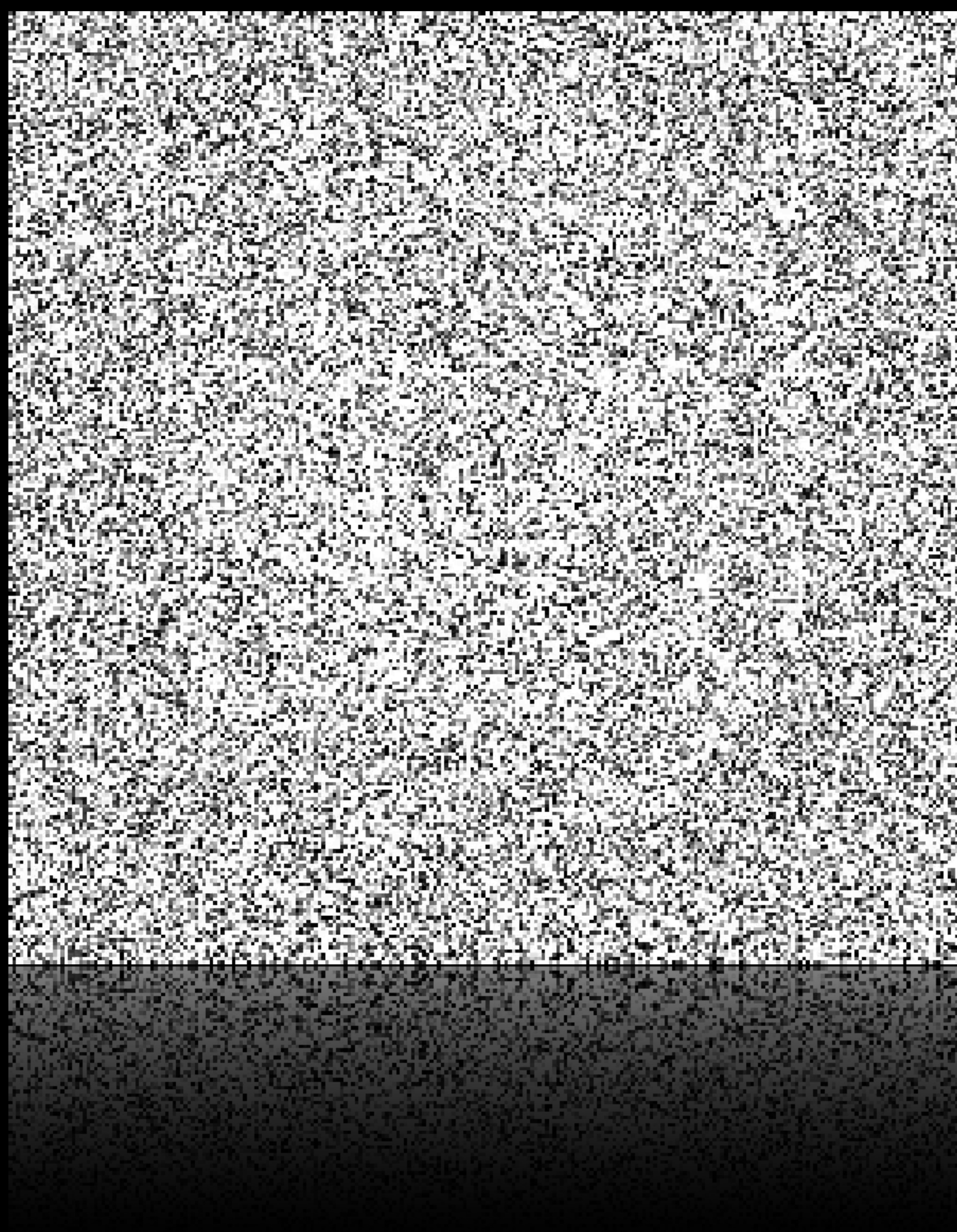
Signal-to-Noise Ratio

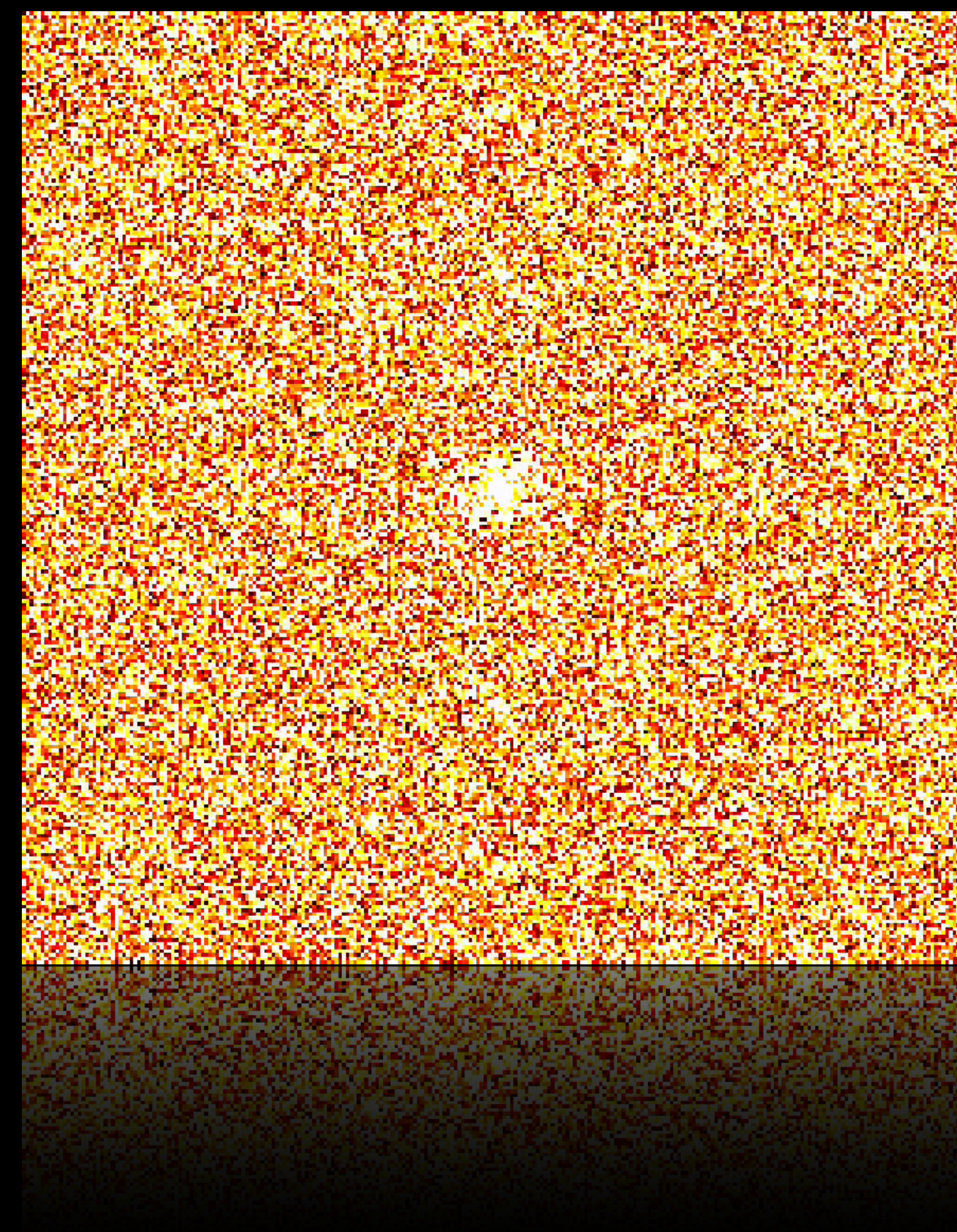
$$SNR \triangleq \frac{\text{signal amplitude}}{\text{standard deviation of noise}}$$

- **SNR – Signal-to-noise ratio**
  - **Signal – Mean signal intensity in ROI**
  - **Noise – Standard deviation of noise**
- **CNR - Contrast-to-noise ratio**
  - **Signal Difference**
    - **Difference between mean signal intensity in two ROIs**
  - **Noise - Standard deviation of noise**

$$CNR \triangleq \frac{\text{signal difference}}{\text{standard deviation of noise}}$$

What is the FT of noise? Noise.





Signal-to-Noise Ratio

$$SNR \propto V\sqrt{t}$$

Large Voxels (Low Resolution)⇔High SNR

Long Scan Time⇔High SNR

High Resolution + Fast Imaging Severely Compromises SNR

Signal-to-Noise Ratio

$$SNR \propto V\sqrt{t}$$

- **V – Voxel Volume**
  - **Slice-thickness (h) x X-res x Y-res**
    - **X-res = FOV_x/N_{kx}**
    - **Y-res = FOV_y/N_{ky}**
- **t – Data acquisition time**
  - **$(N_{kx} \times N_{ky} \times N_{averages})$/bandwidth**

$$SNR \propto \frac{FOV_x}{N_{k_x}} \frac{FOV_y}{N_{k_y}} h \sqrt{\frac{N_{k_x} N_{k_y} N_{avg}}{BW}}$$

Signal-to-Noise Ratio

$$SNR \propto V\sqrt{t}$$

- **Example #1**
  - Halving slice thickness requires 4x averages to maintain SNR
- **Example #2**
  - Doubling slice thickness requires 25% time to maintain SNR
- **Example #3**
  - FOV is, in general, fixed.
  - To increase resolution we increase N_{kx} or N_{ky}.
  - This results in increased scan time, but
  - The SNR decreases.

$$SNR \propto \frac{FOV_x}{N_{k_x}} \frac{FOV_y}{N_{k_y}} h \sqrt{\frac{N_{k_x} N_{k_y} N_{avg}}{BW}}$$

Parallel Imaging and SNR

$$SNR_{P.I.} = \frac{SNR}{g\sqrt{R}}$$

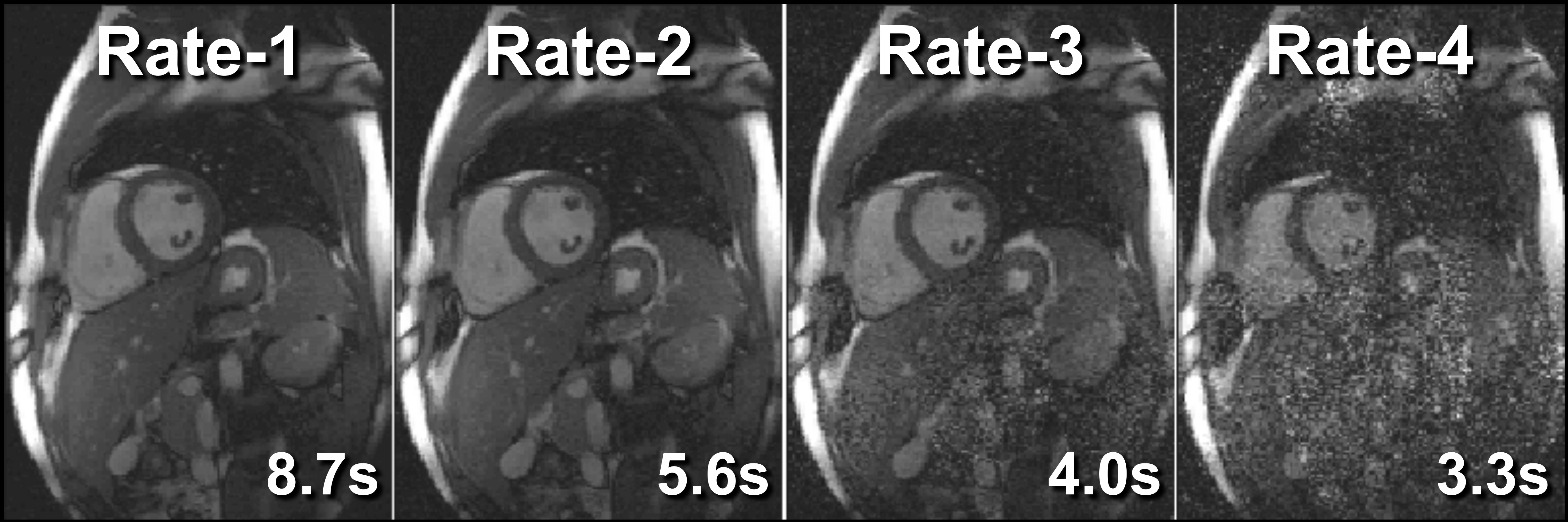
- **g - geometry factor**
  - **Loss associated with coil noise-correlation**
  - **For R=1, g=1**
  - **For R=2, g=~1.1-1.5**
- **R - reduction or acceleration factor**
  - **Loss associated with scan time reduction**
  - **Typically ~1/2 N-coils**
- **SNR for P.I. is spatially dependent**
  - **Higher in areas of aliasing**

Parallel imaging has additional SNR penalties, but decreases scan time.

Impact of Acceleration

High SNR
"Long" Acq.

Low SNR
Short Acq.



P. Kellman (NIH)

High acceleration rates lead to local noise amplification.

Readout Bandwidth

Receiver Bandwidth

- **Receiver Bandwidth (RBW, Δf)**
  - The range of frequencies across the FOV
    - ±kHz [range across FOV]
  - Alternately range of frequencies per pixel
    - Pixel bandwidth [Hz/pixel]
  - …during ***readout***.

$f_0 - \Delta f/2$ f_0 $f_0 + \Delta f/2$

$$\Delta f = \frac{1}{2}\frac{\gamma}{2\pi} G_x \cdot FOV_x$$

User can pick 2 of 3 (Δf, G_x, FOV_x)

Temporal Nyquist Sampling Requires: $\Delta t = \frac{1}{2\Delta f}$

k-space Nyquist Sampling Requires: $\Delta k_x = \frac{\gamma}{2\pi} G_x \Delta t$

$$\Delta k_x = \frac{1}{FOV_x}$$

$$N_x \cdot \Delta k_x = \frac{N_x}{FOV_x} = \frac{1}{\Delta x}$$

Receiver Bandwidth

- **High Receiver Bandwidth (RBW, Δf)**
  - Stronger gradients
  - Larger range of frequencies across the FOV (or pixel)
  - Less chemical shift (smaller freq. difference per pixel)
  - Lower SNR (shorter acquisition time)
  - Shorter TE (move across *k*-space faster)

$$\Delta f = \frac{1}{2}\frac{\gamma}{2\pi}G_x \cdot FOV_x$$

User can pick 2 of 3 (Δf, G_x, FOV_x)

Temporal Nyquist Sampling Requires: $\Delta t = \frac{1}{2\Delta f}$

k-space Nyquist Sampling Requires: $\Delta k_x = \frac{\gamma}{2\pi}G_x \Delta t$

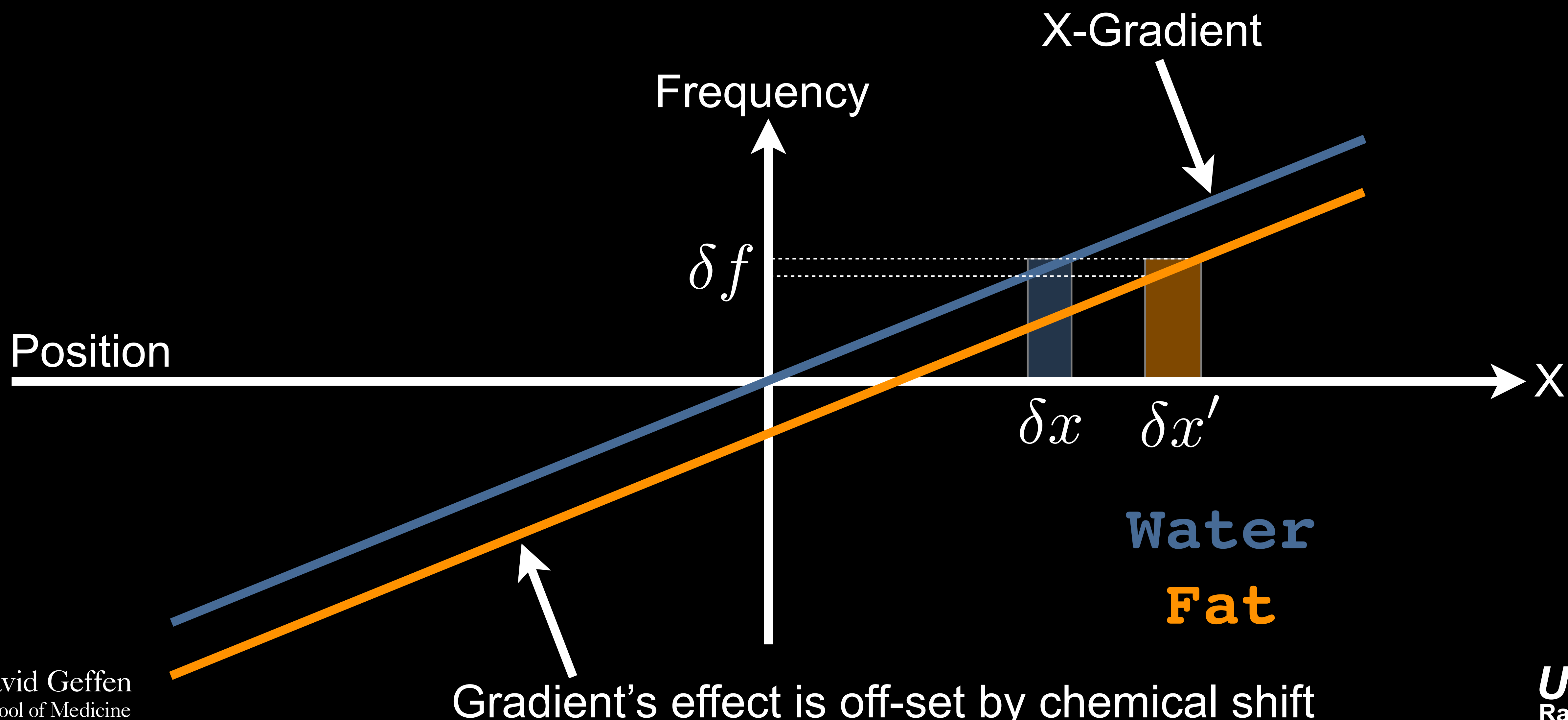
$$\Delta k_x = \frac{1}{FOV_x}$$

$$N_x \cdot \Delta k_x = \frac{N_x}{FOV_x} = \frac{1}{\Delta x}$$

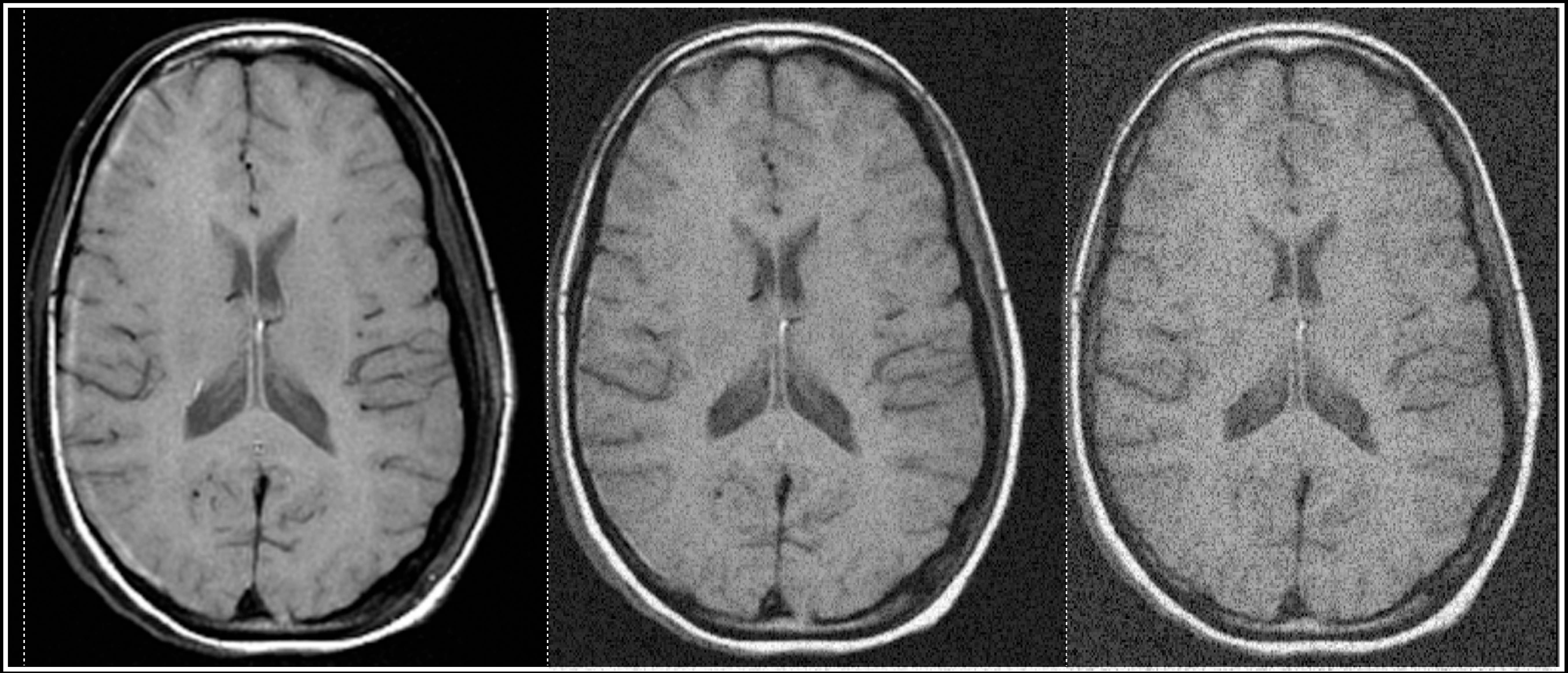
Chemical Shift

Chemical Shift Artifact

- **Gradients provide linear variation in frequency**
- **Fat has a 3.5ppm lower frequency than water**
  - **-222Hz @ 1.5T and -444Hz @ 3.0T**
- **Scanner detects frequency, then maps to position**
- **Scanner "assumes" everything is water, therefore fat (lower frequency) is interpreted as lower frequency (shifted position) water.**



Chemical Shift Artifact



BW = ± 4kHz

Low Bandwidth
Large Fat-Water Shift
High SNR

BW = ± 8kHz

Readout →

BW = ± 16kHz

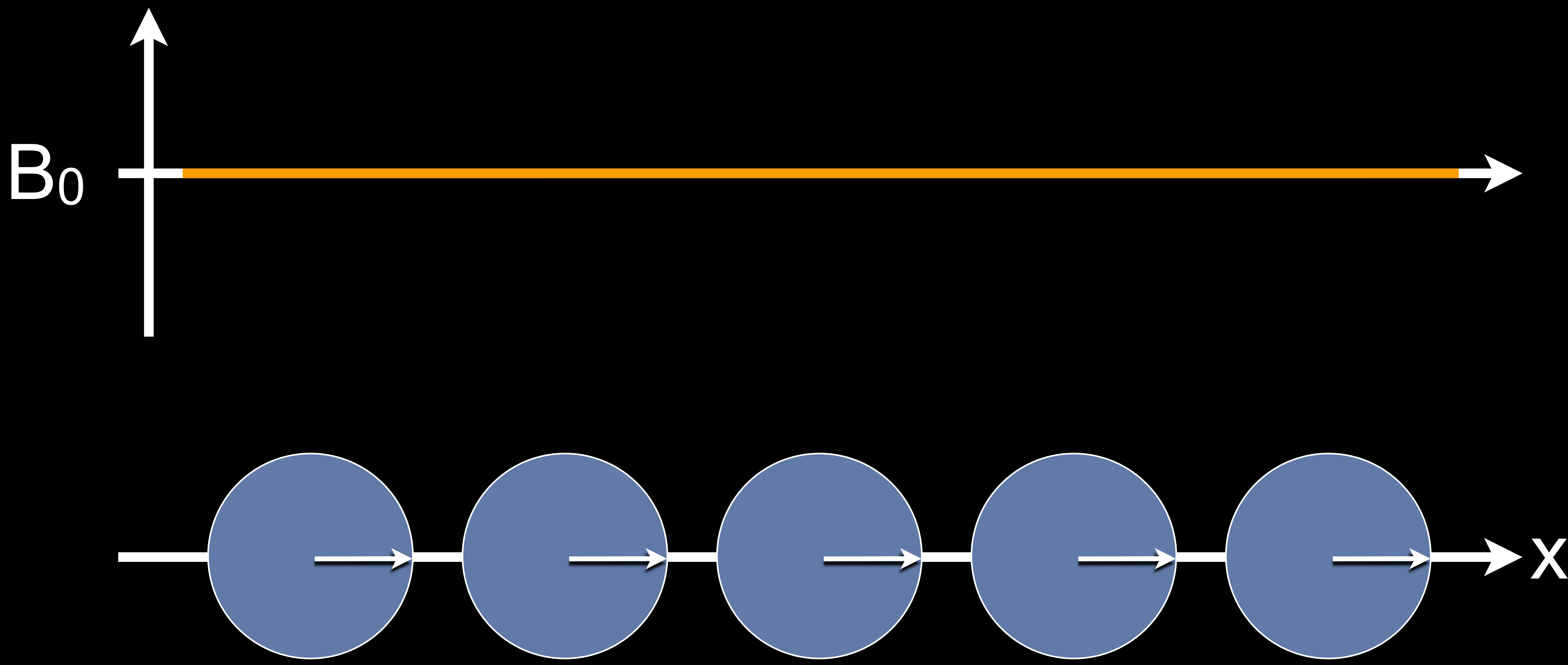
High Bandwidth
Small Fat-Water Shift
Low SNR

Solution

- High bandwidth pulse sequences
  - Degrades SNR (reduces acquisition time)
  - Reduces chemical shift artifact
- Fat saturation pulses/techniques

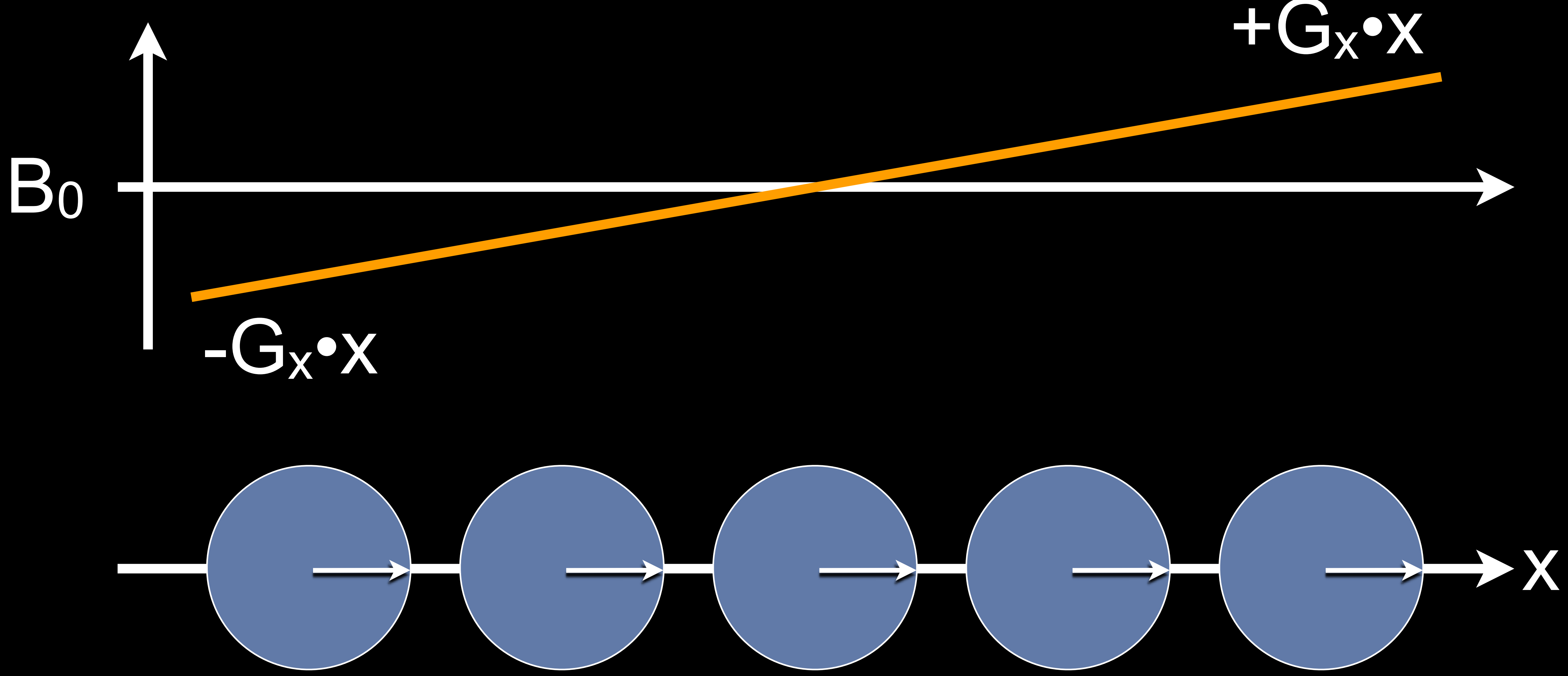
Gradient Echoes and Fat

GRE & Fat/Water Frequency



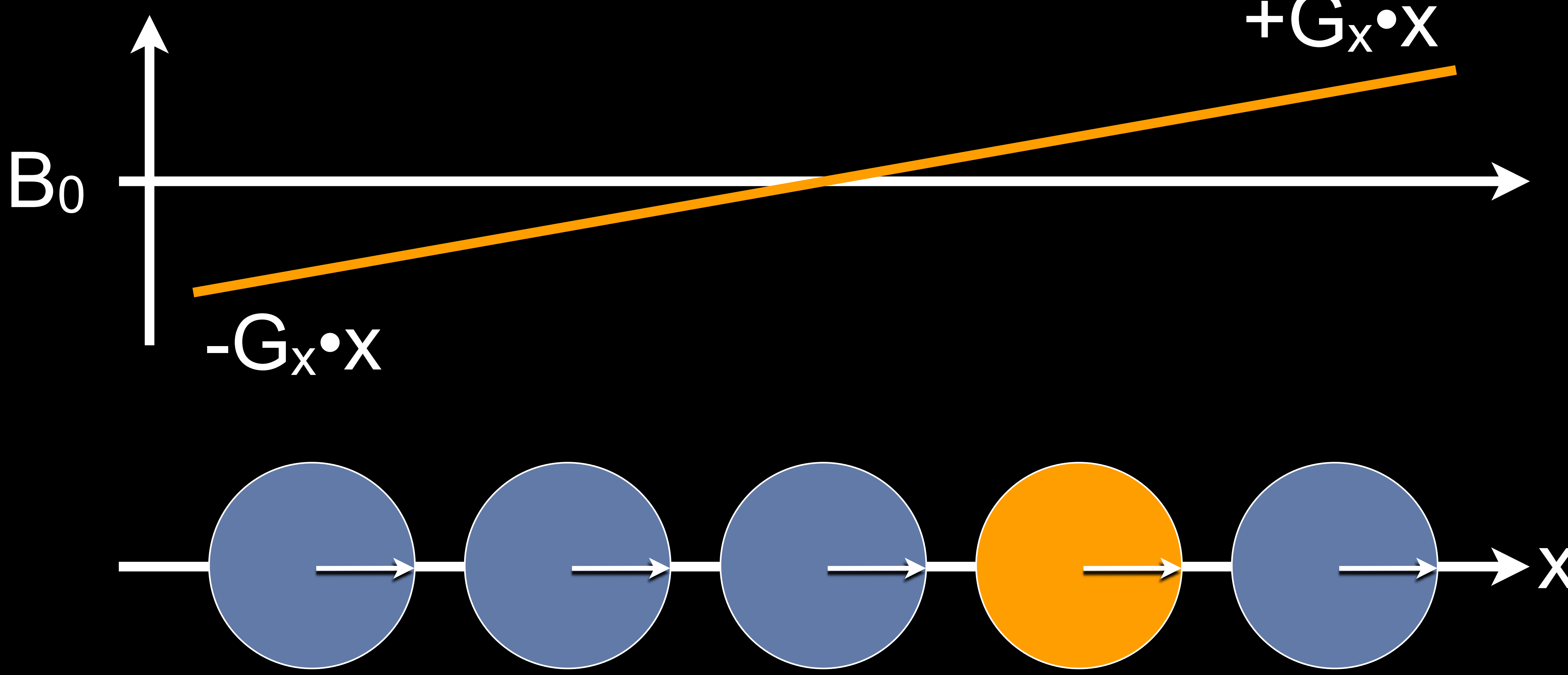
Water Spins in a Uniform Field

GRE & Fat/Water Frequency



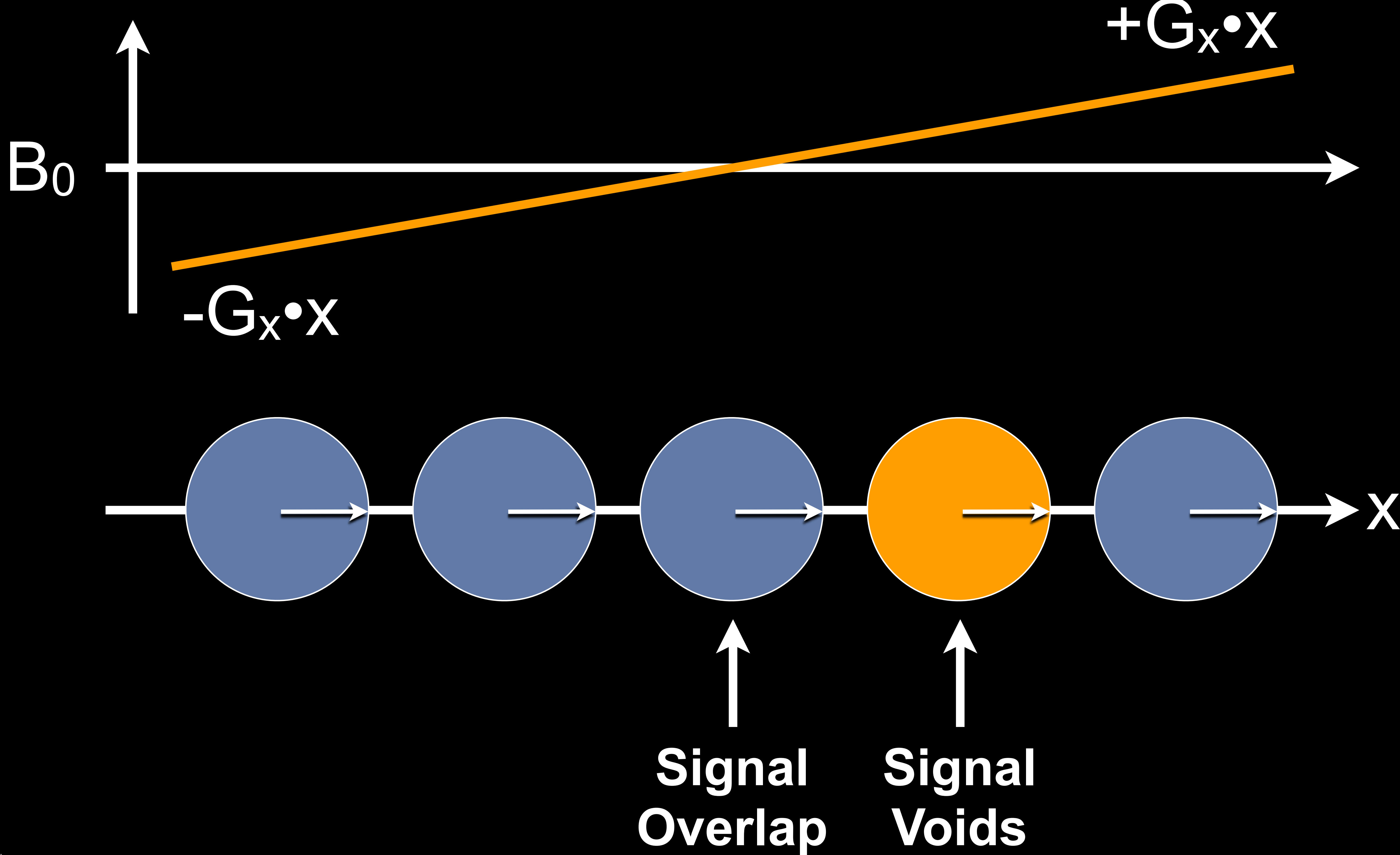
Water Spins in a Gradient Field

GRE & Fat/Water Frequency



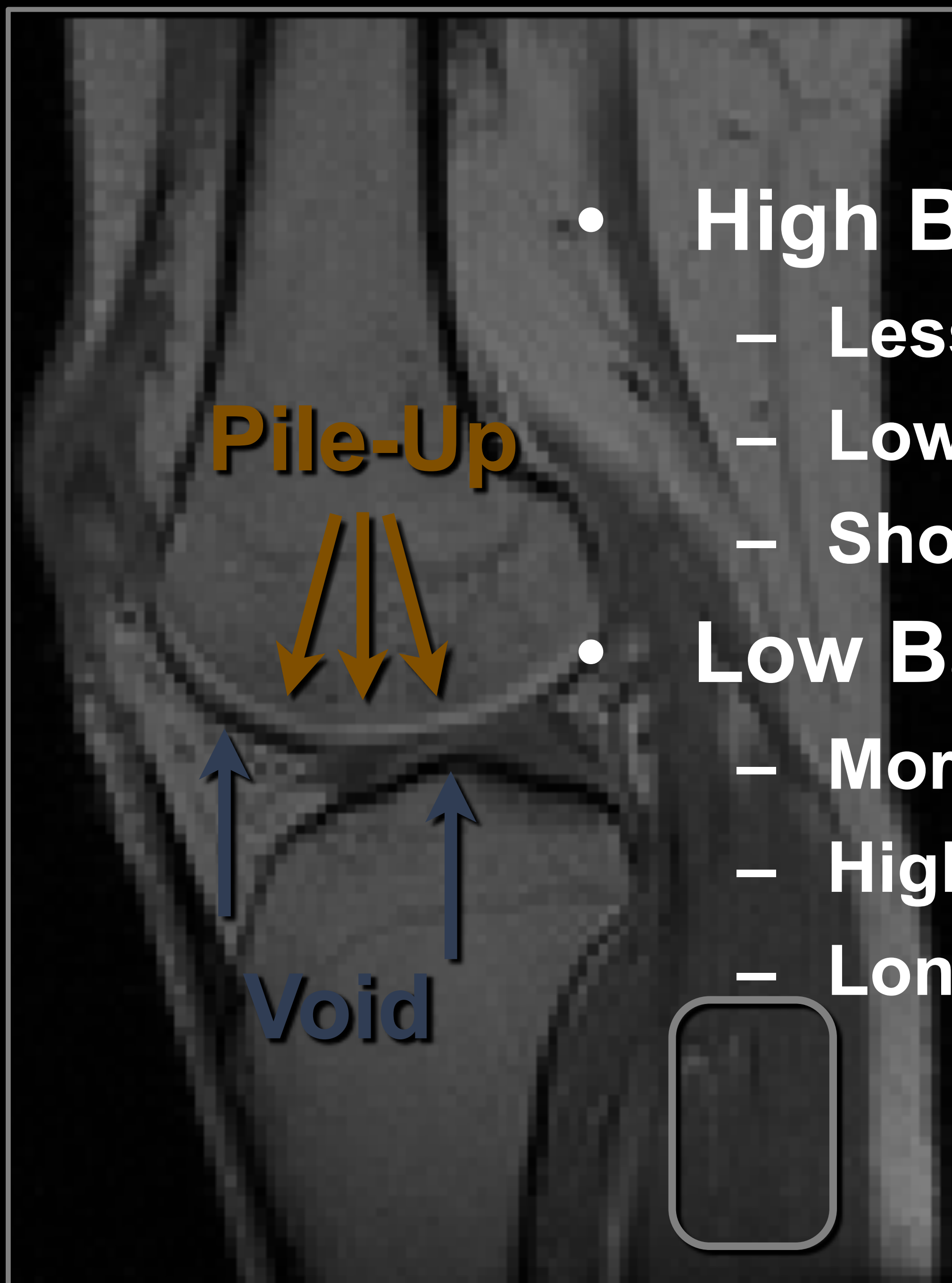
Water & Fat Spins in a Gradient Field

GRE & Fat/Water Frequency



GRE & Fat/Water Frequency

Low Bandwidth

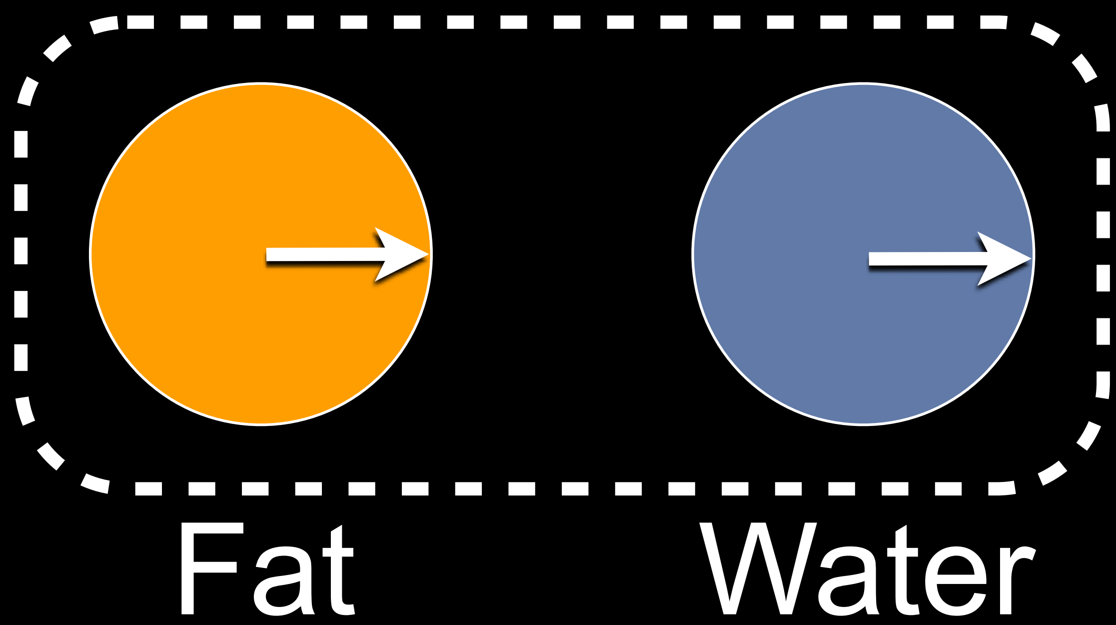


High Bandwidth

- **High Bandwidth**
  - Less chemical shift
  - Lower SNR
  - Short TE/TR
- **Low Bandwidth**
  - More chemical shift
  - Higher SNR
  - Longer TE/TR

GRE and Fat/Water Phase

- **Pixels are frequently a mixture of fat and water**
- **Pixel intensity is the vector sum of fat and water**



In-Phase

→ + → >0

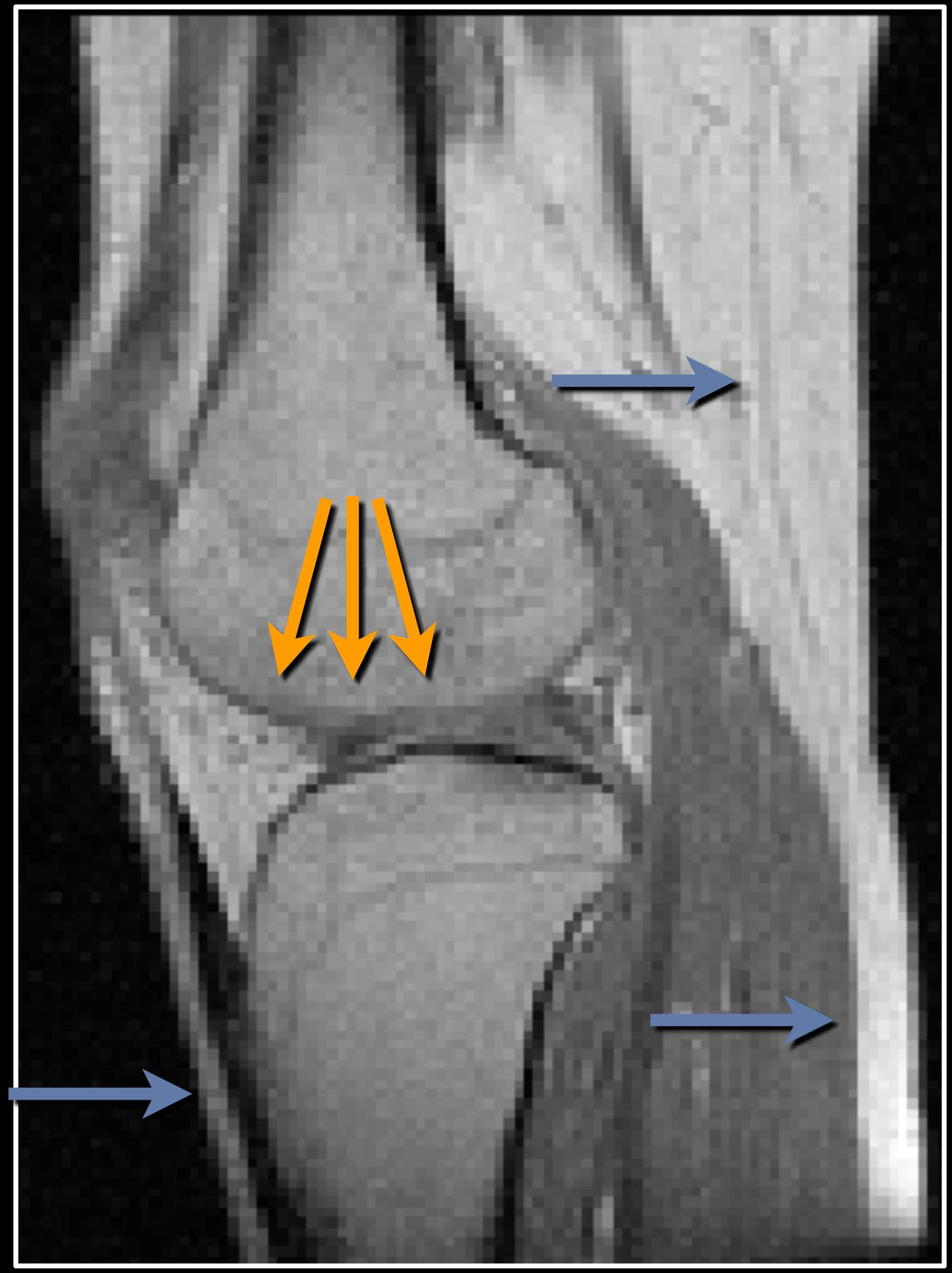
Opposed-Phase

← + → =0

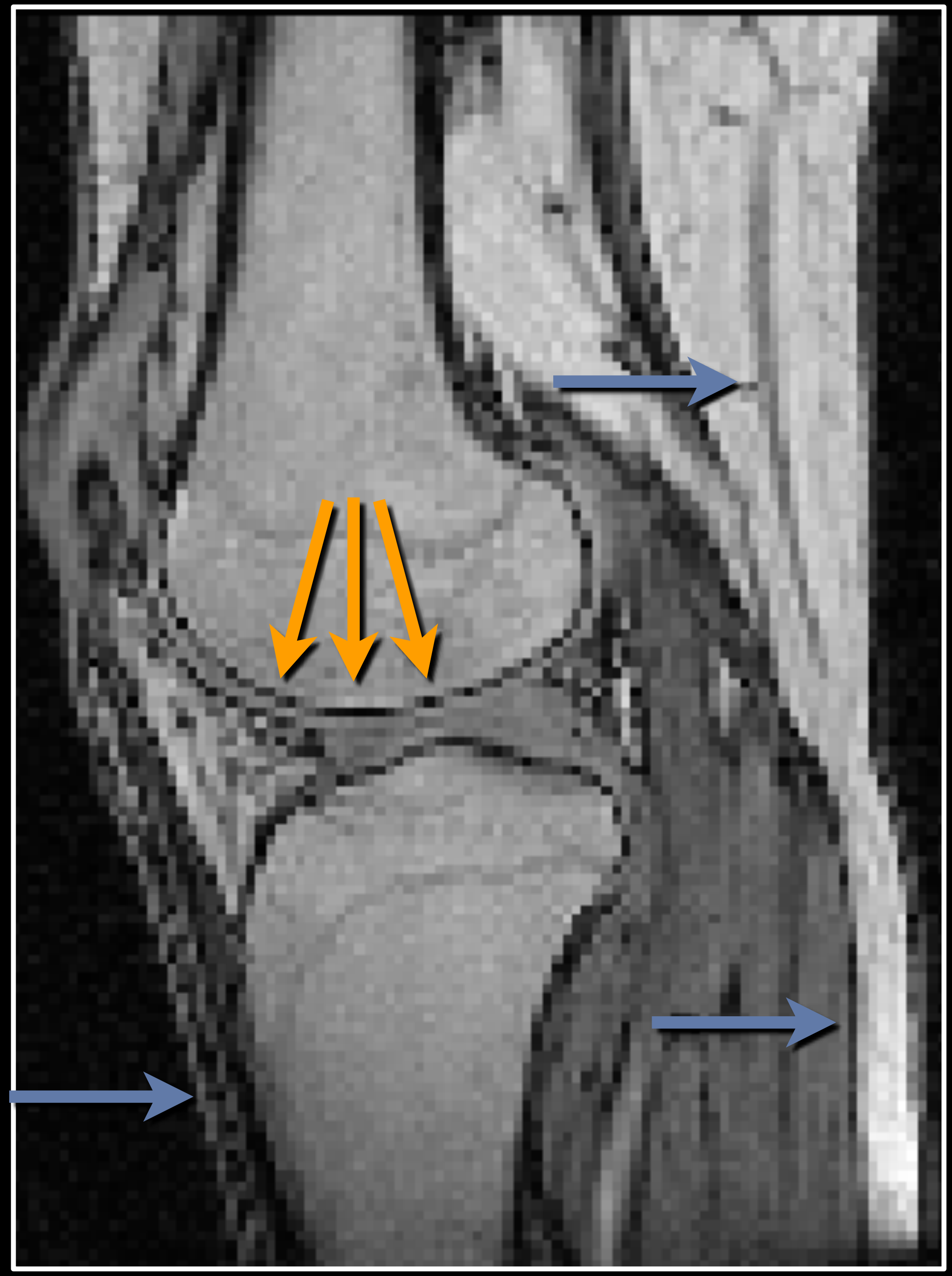
The TE controls the phase between fat and water.

GRE and Fat/Water Phase

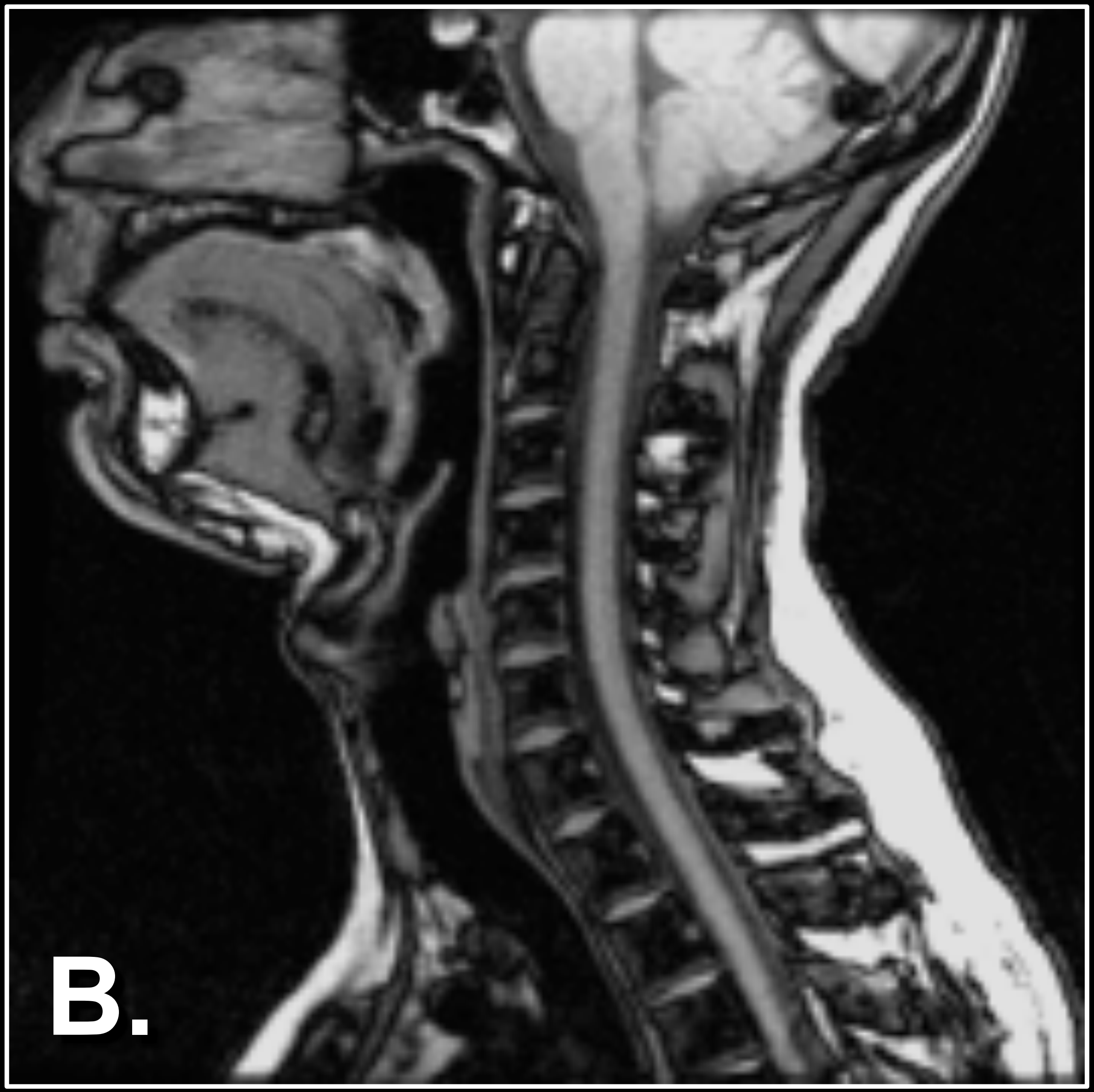
In-Phase



Opposed-Phase

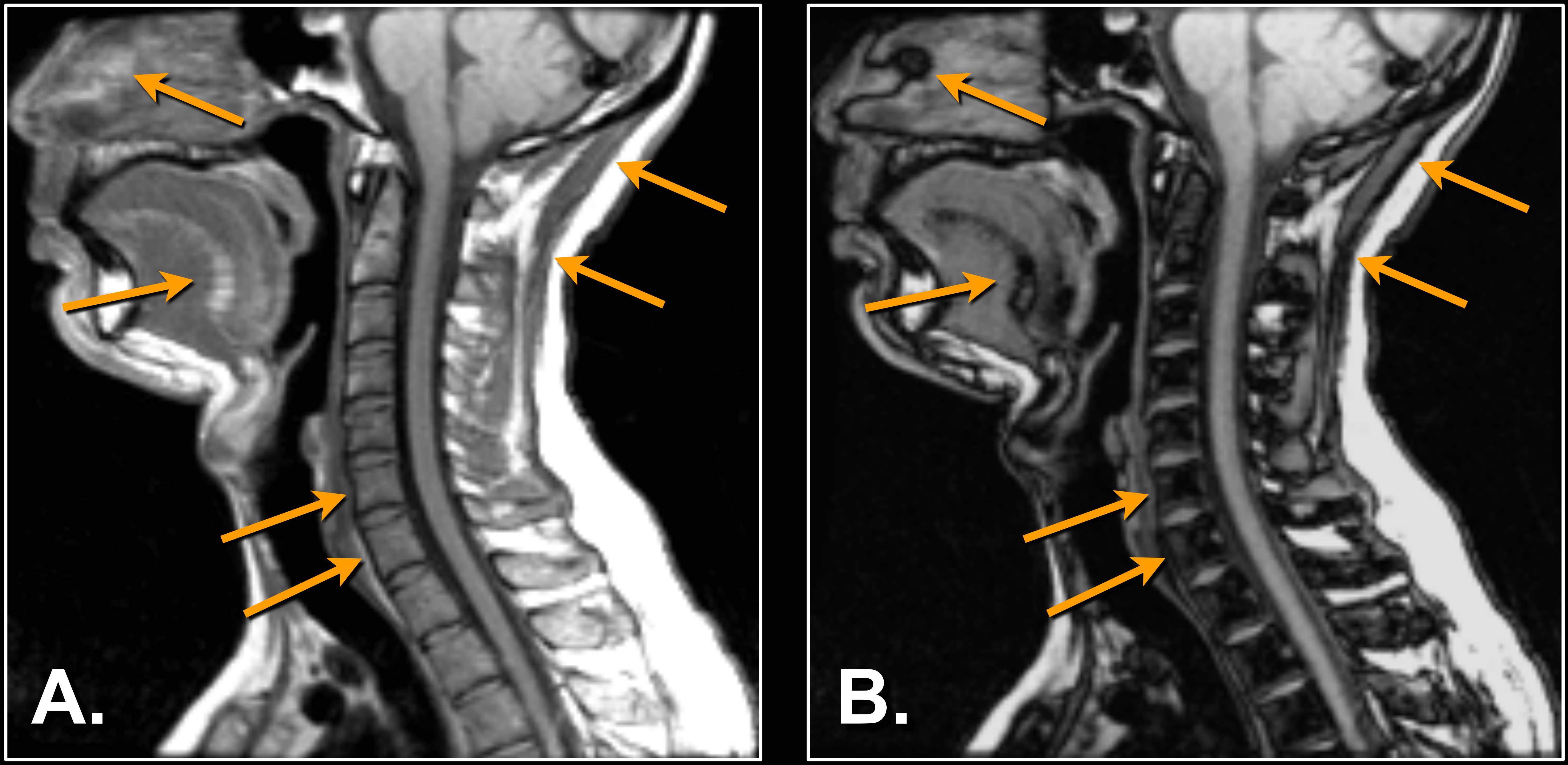


Which image is the in-phase image?



Images Courtesy of Scott Reeder

Which image is the in-phase image?



In-Phase **Opposed-Phase**

Gradient Echoes & Fat Suppression

- **Why is fat suppression/separation important?**
  - Fat is bright on most pulse sequences.
  - But so are many other things...
    - CSF & edema
    - Flowing blood
    - Contrast enhanced tissues
- **Fat obscures underlying pathology**
  - Edema, neoplasm, inflammation
- **How can fat be eliminated in GRE images?**
  - Fat saturation pulses
  - Multi-echo acquisitions
    - Dixon/IDEAL

Fat Suppression

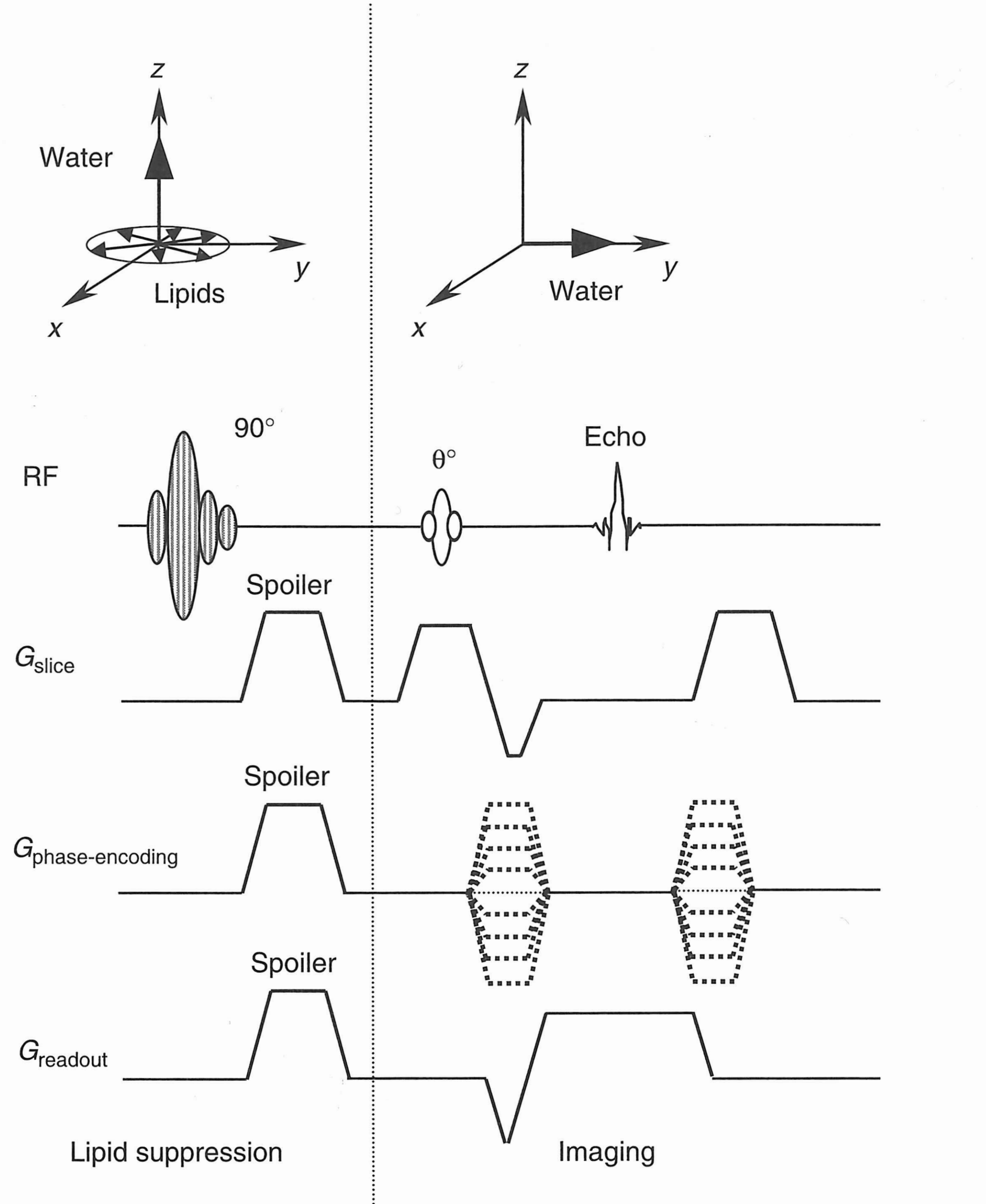
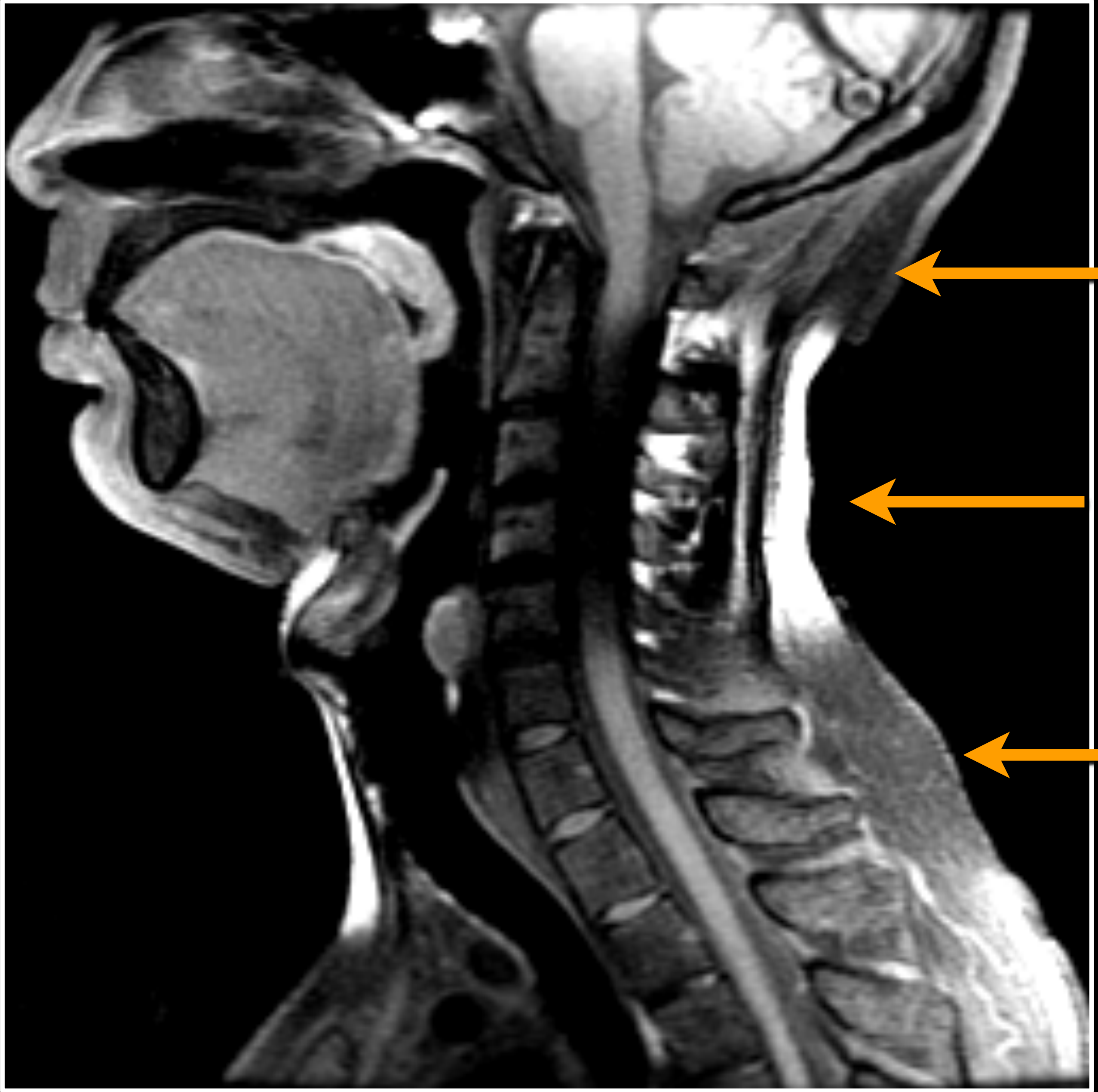


FIGURE 4.15 An example of using a spectrally selective pulse to suppress lipid signals in an imaging sequence. The 90° spectrally selective pulse (shaded area to denote the frequency offset), usually with maximal phase dispersion, is applied ~217 Hz off-resonance with respect to the water resonant frequency to excite lipids at 1.5 T. The lipid signals are dephased by one or more spoiler gradients. After lipid suppression (portion to the left of the dotted vertical line), an imaging sequence is executed to excite water signals and form a water image (portion to the right of the dotted vertical line).

Fat Suppression



Fat-Sat Can Be Spatially Non-Uniform

Fat-Sat Image

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Images Courtesy of Scott Reeder

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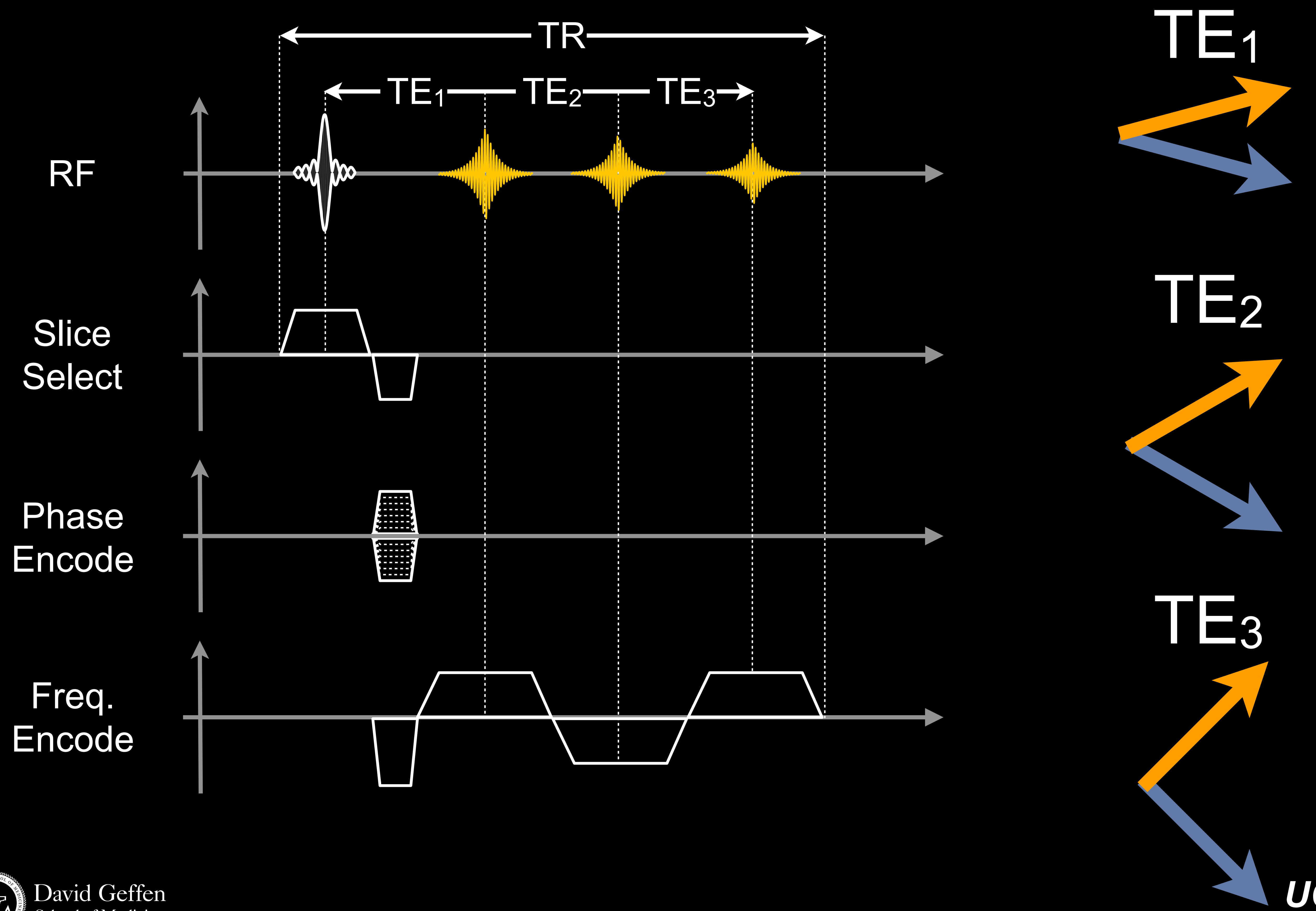
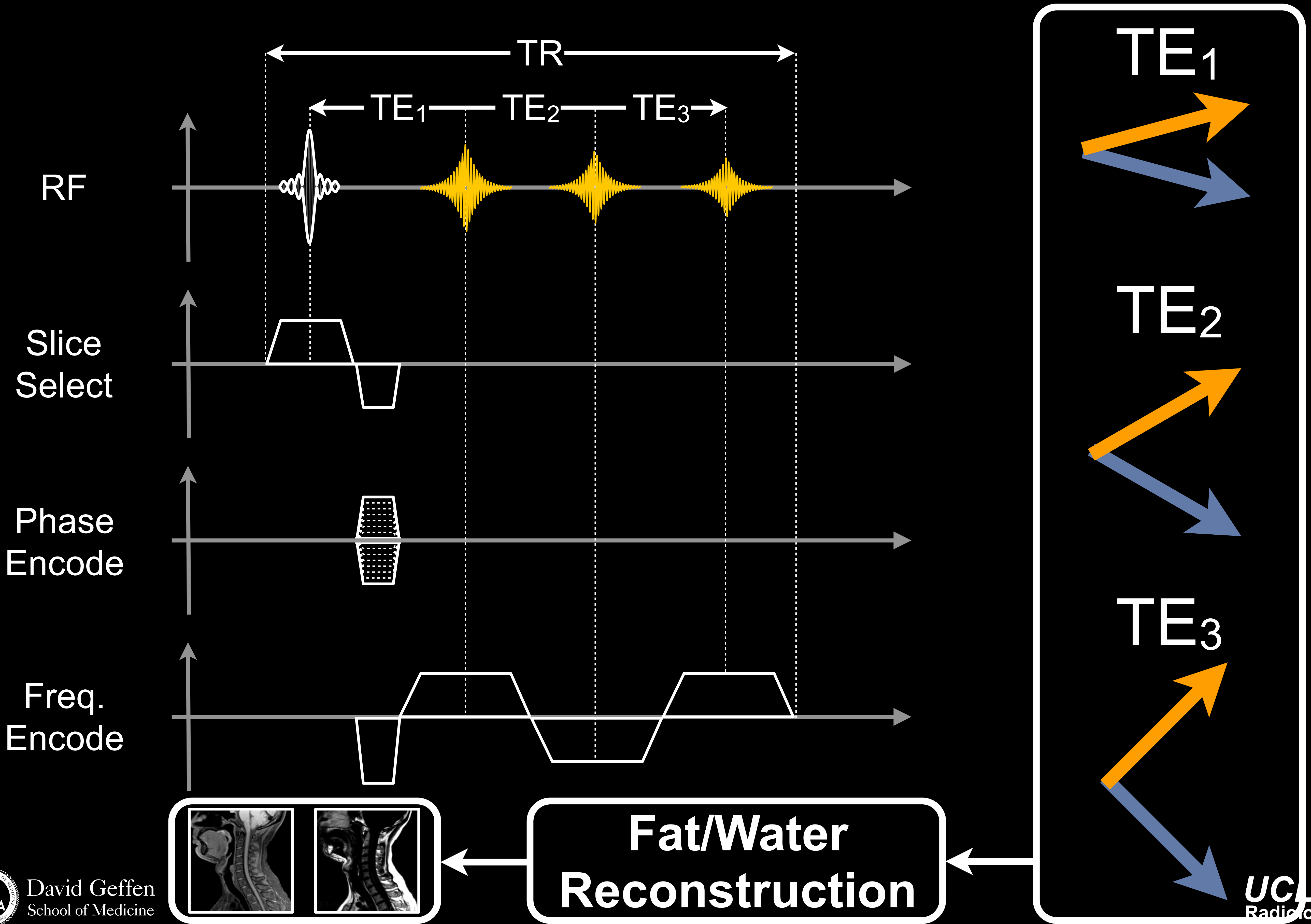
GRE & Fat/Water Separation - How?



GRE & Fat/Water Separation - How?



Gradient Echoes & Fat/Water Separation

Water Image

Fat Image

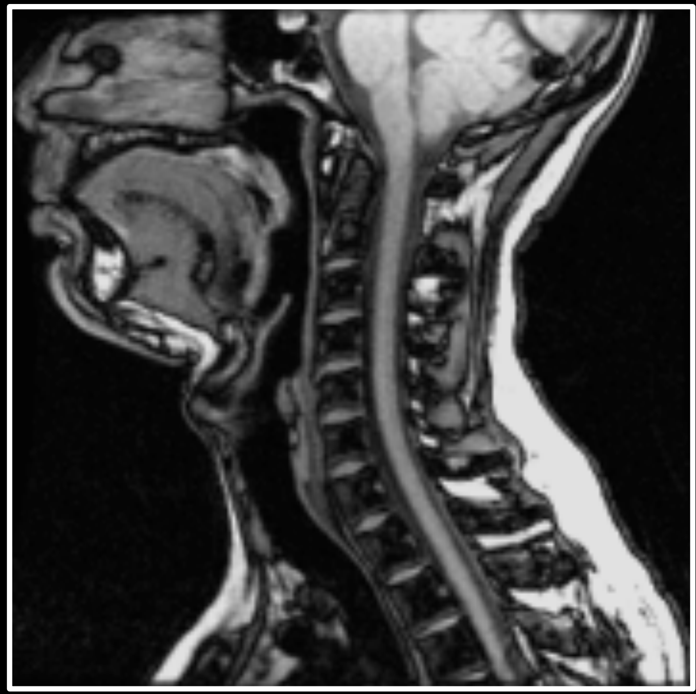
Gradient Echoes & Fat/Water Separation

Imperfect Fat Sat

Water Image

Fat Image

In-Phase



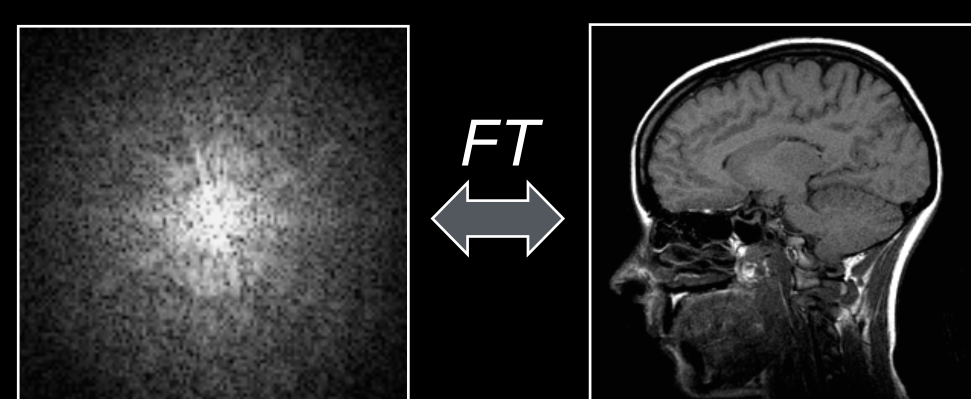
Opposed-Phase

Images Courtesy of Dr. Scott Reeder

Motion Artifacts

Motion in MRI

- Motion is responsible for a corruption in spatial localization in PE direction, resulting in blurring and/or ghosting artifacts
- Typical types of motion in body
  - Patient motion
  - Respiration
  - Cardiac motion and vascular pulsation
  - Peristalsis & bowel gas
- Recording signal in *k*-space not image domain!



Motion Artifacts - Part I

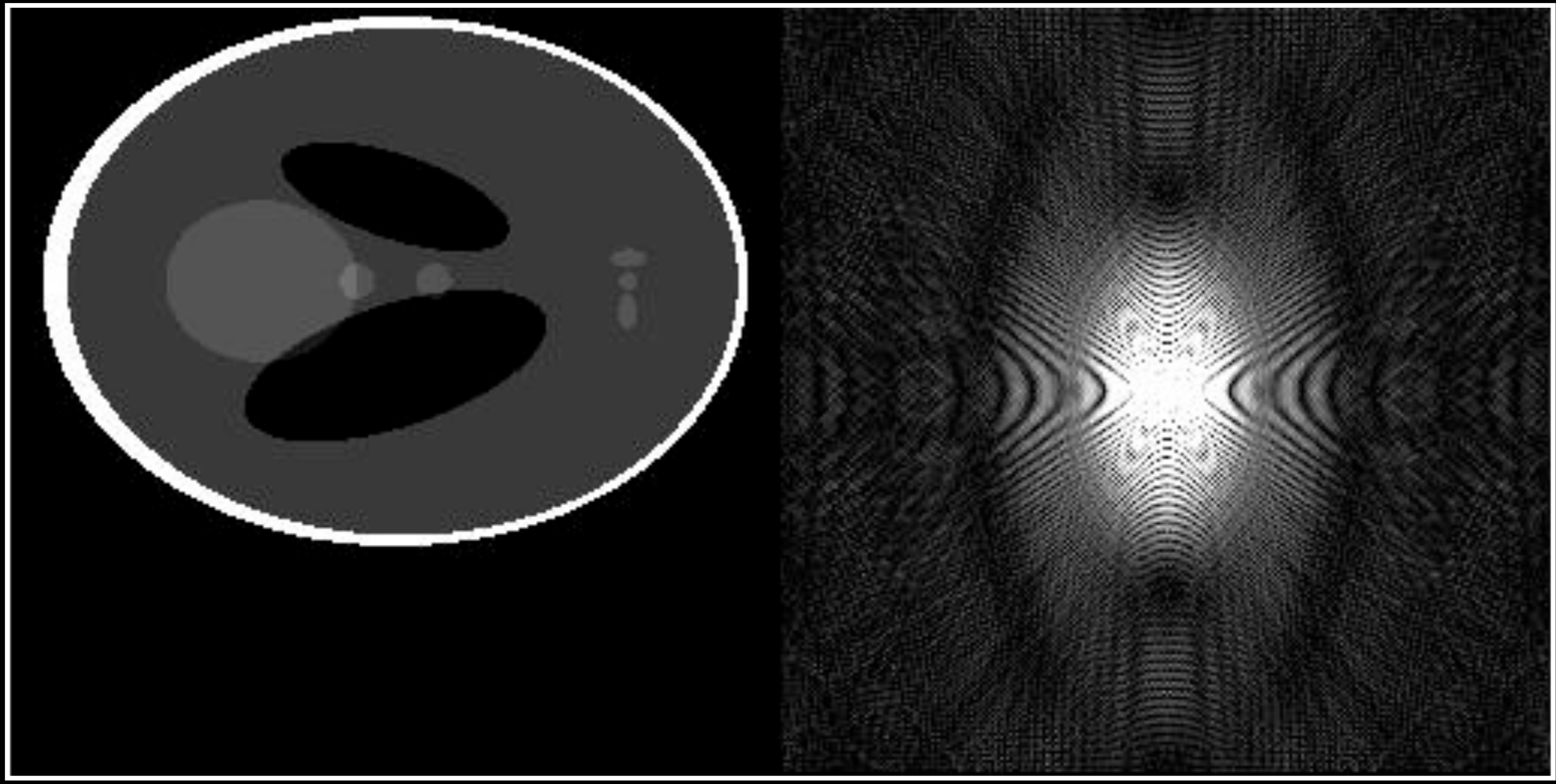
Slow/Bulk Motion

Examples:

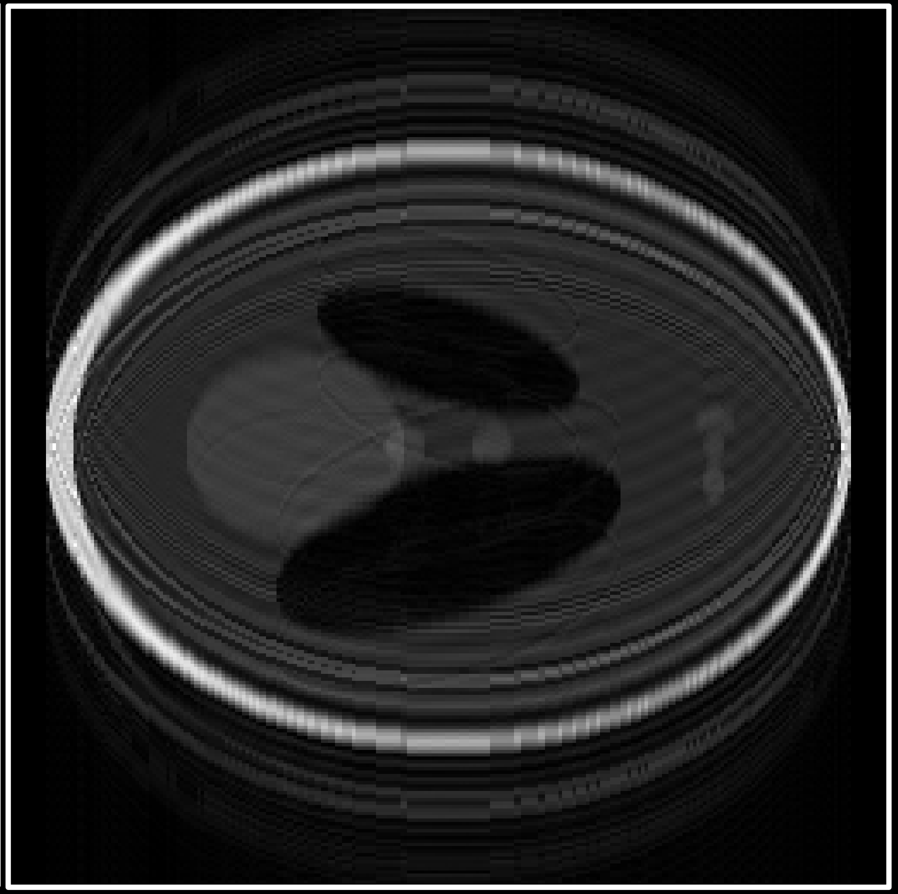
- Respiration
- Feet motion
- Swallowing

Motion Artifacts - Part I

Slow/Bulk Motion

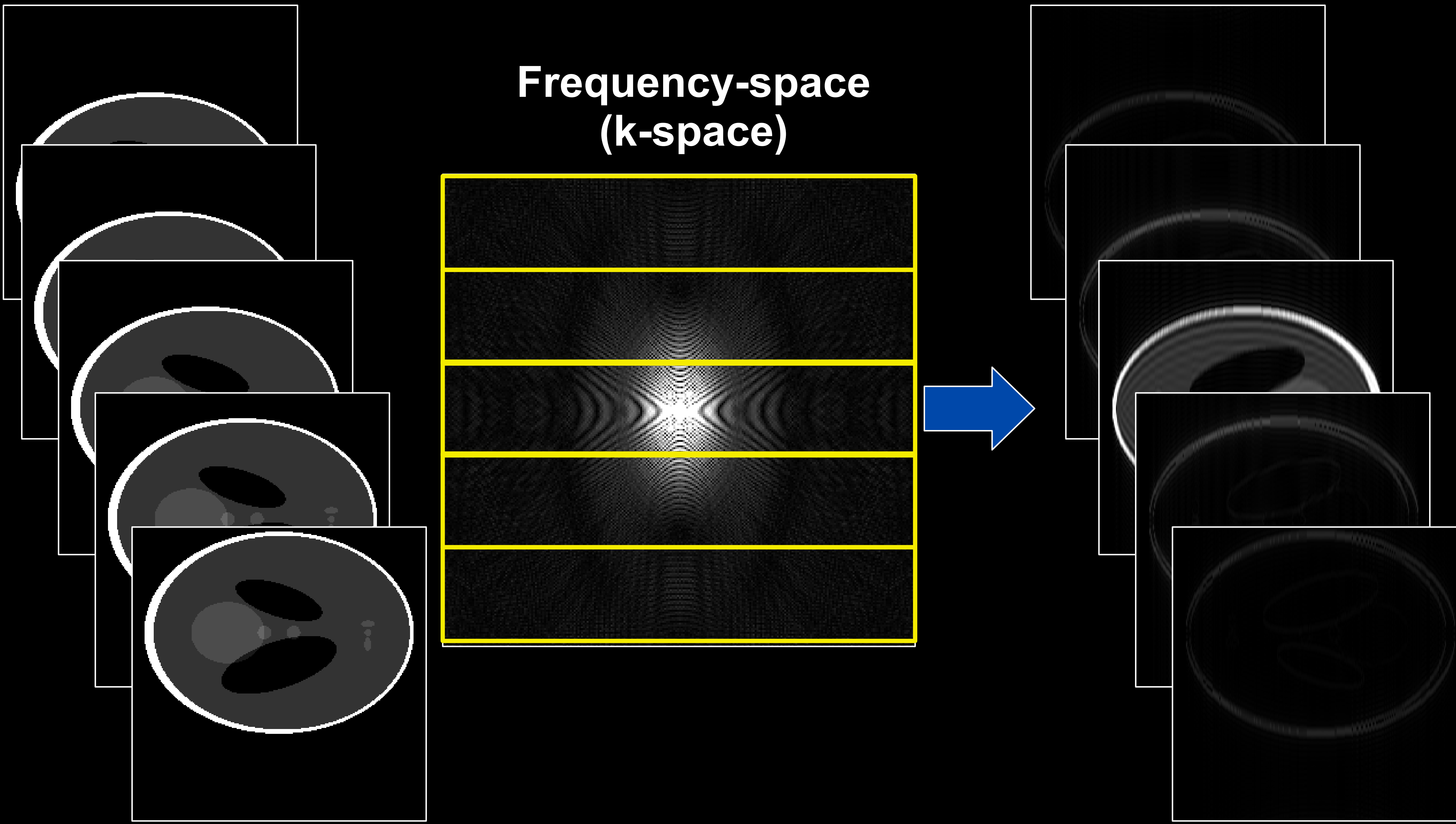


MR Image with Motion Artifacts



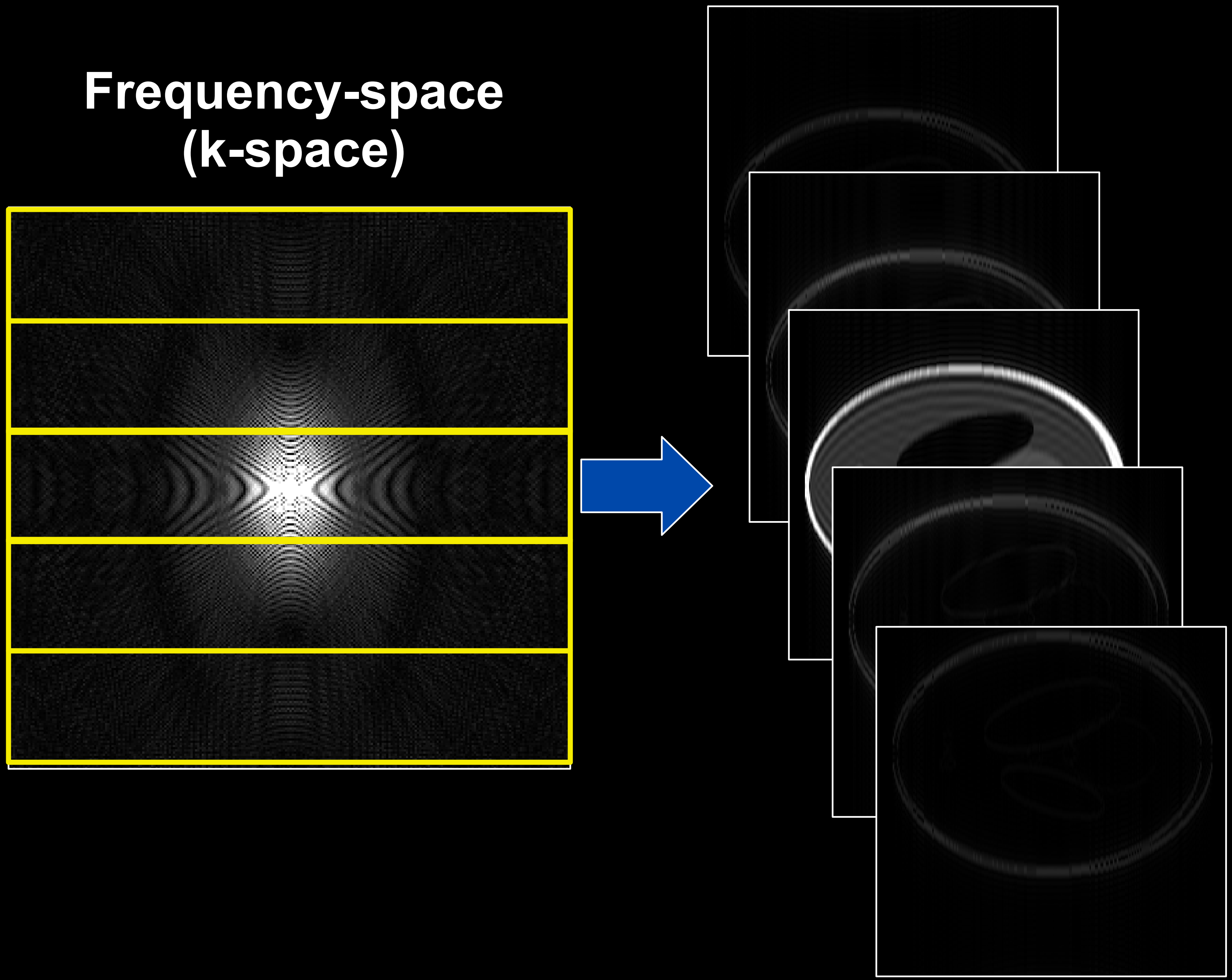
Fourier Transform

Motion Artifacts - Part I



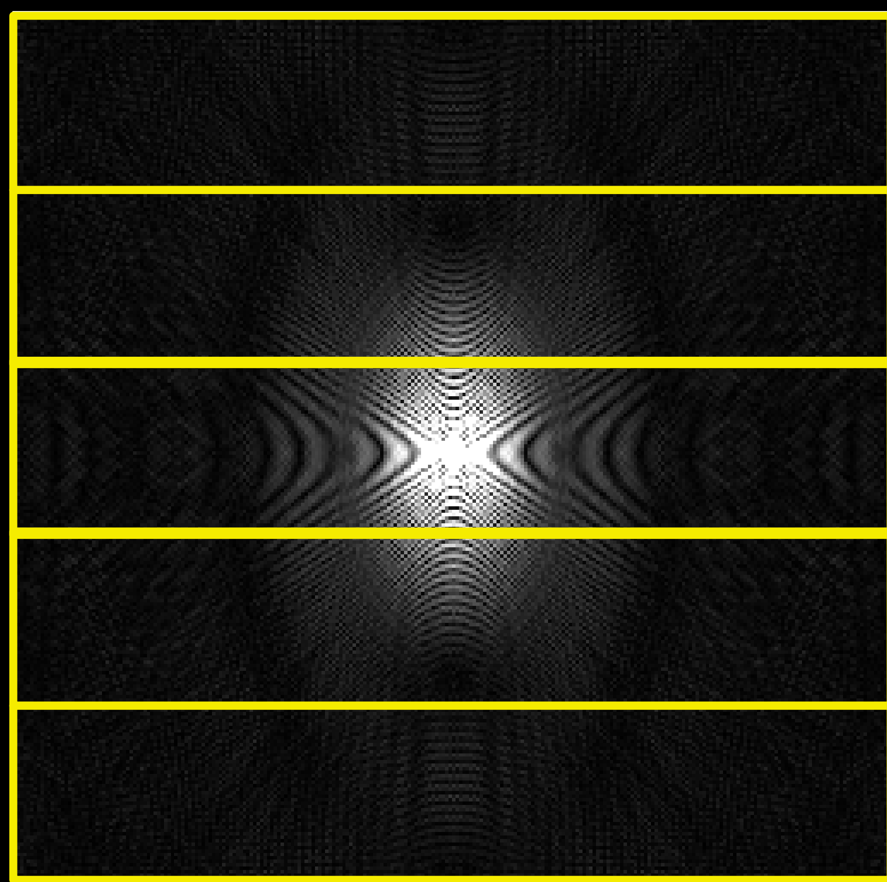
Motion Artifacts - Part I

Frequency-space (k-space)

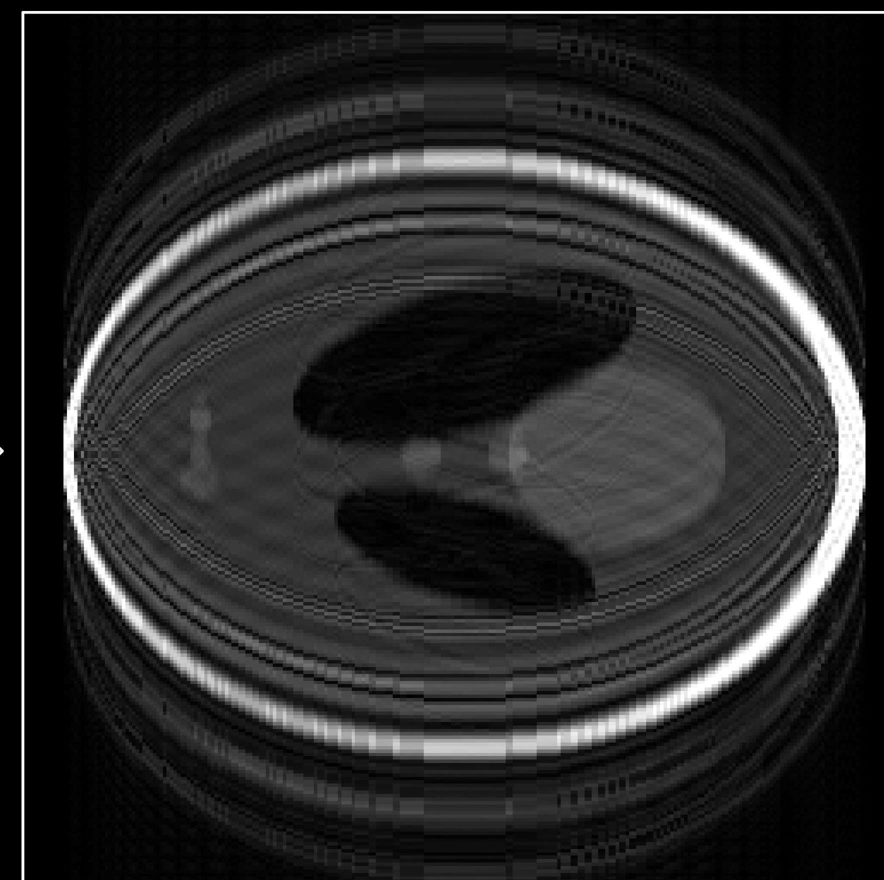


Motion Artifacts - Part I

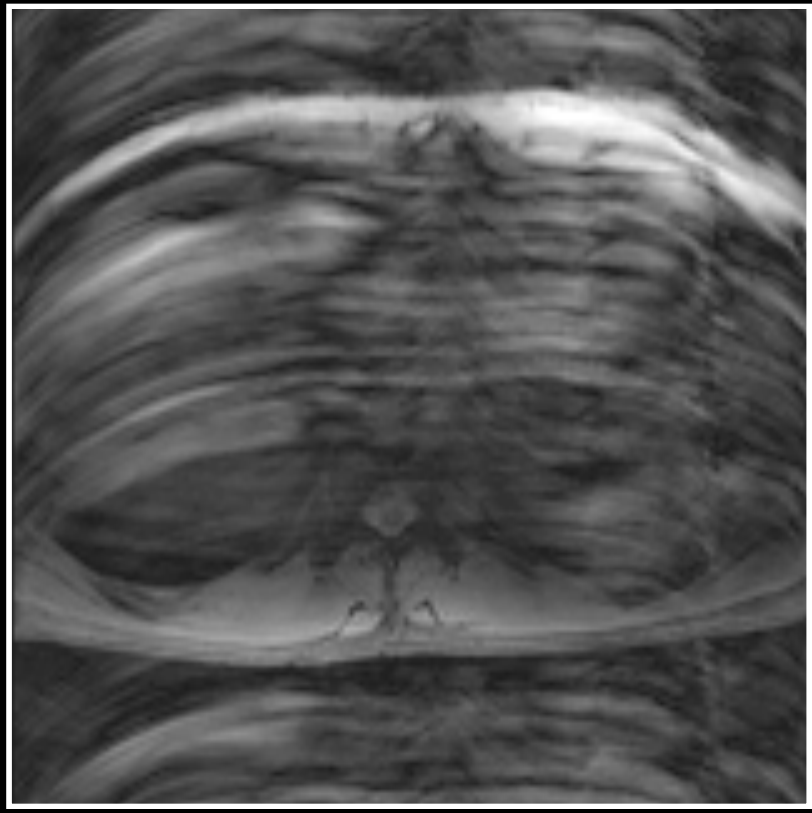
Frequency-space (k-space)



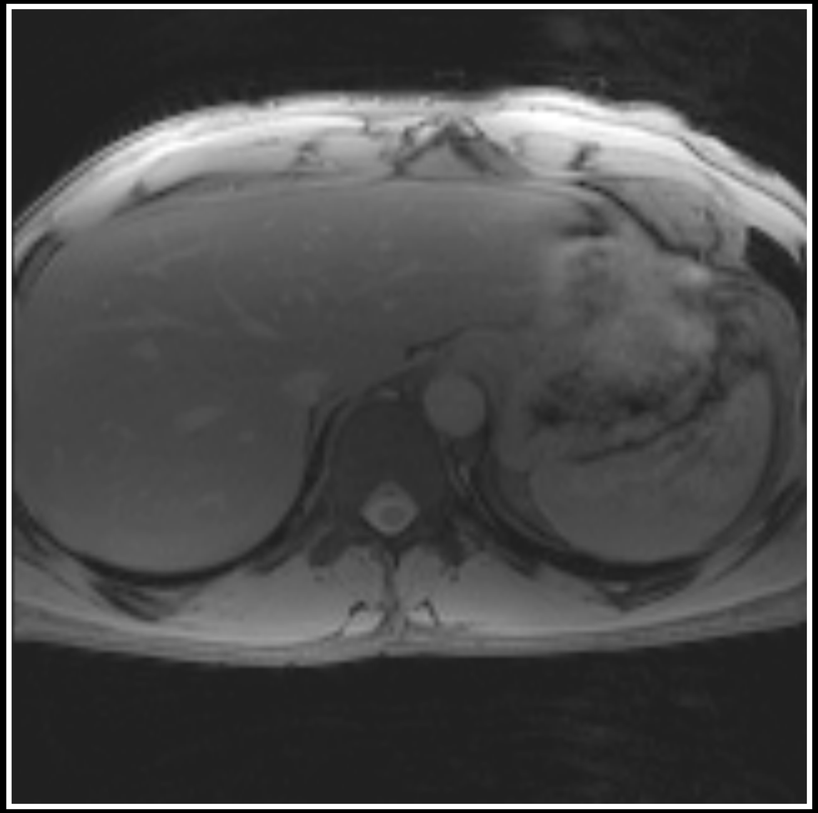
MR Image with Motion Artifacts



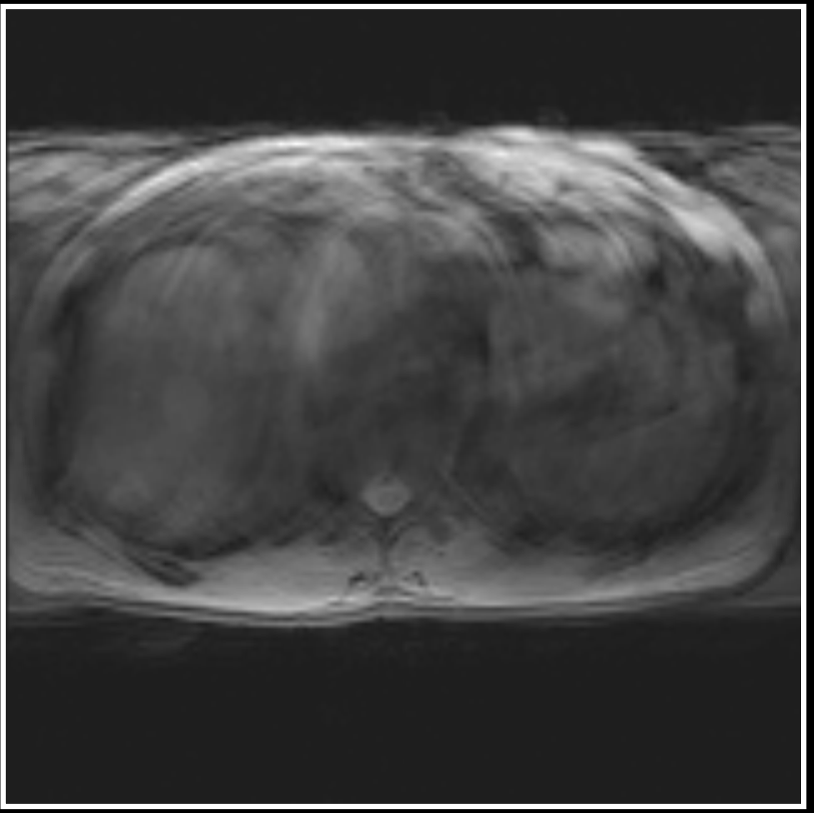
Breathing (Motion) Artifacts



Free Breathing



Breath held



Free Breathing

Motion artifacts appear in the phase encode direction.

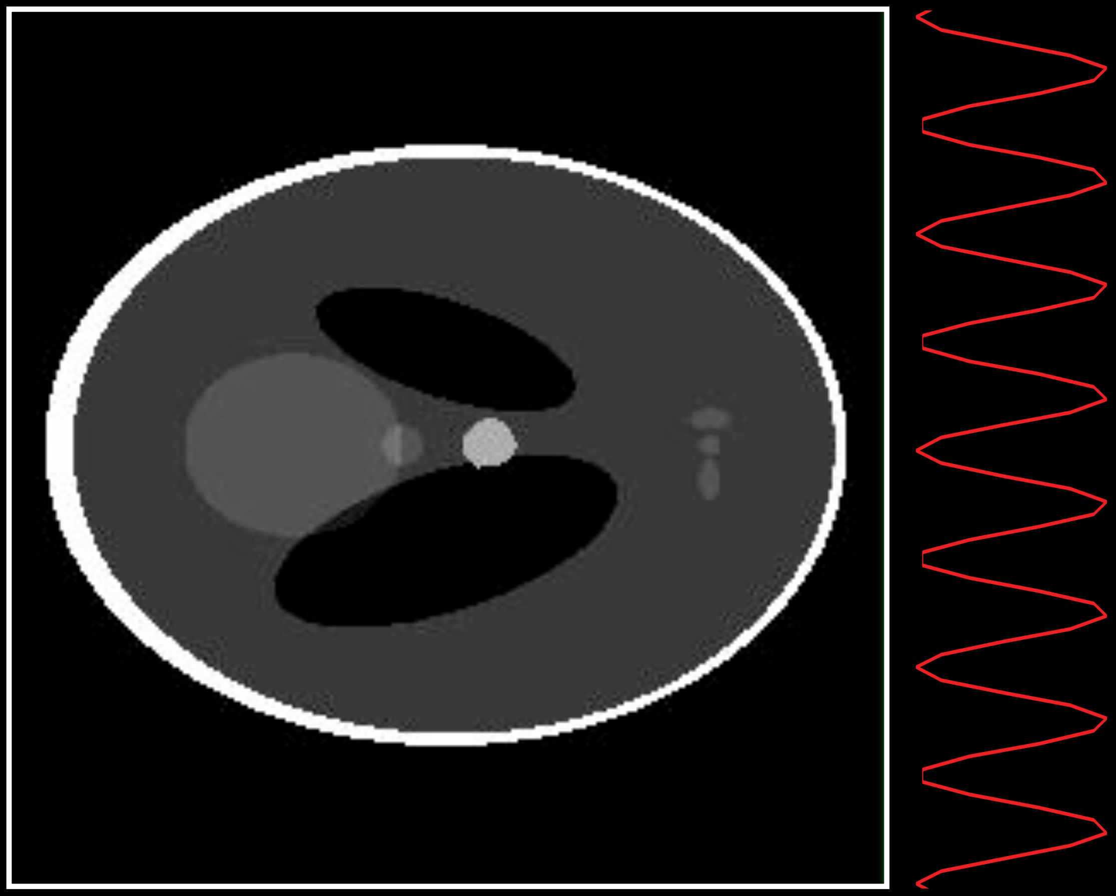
Remedies (and Penalties)

- **Possible solutions?**
  - Breath-holding
  - Respiratory gating
  - Reduces body movements
    - Patient coaching, physical restraint, sedation

- **Disadvantages**
  - Requires fast sequences
  - Increases the scan time; restricts the available TRs
  - Patients acceptance and discomfort

Motion Artifacts - Part II

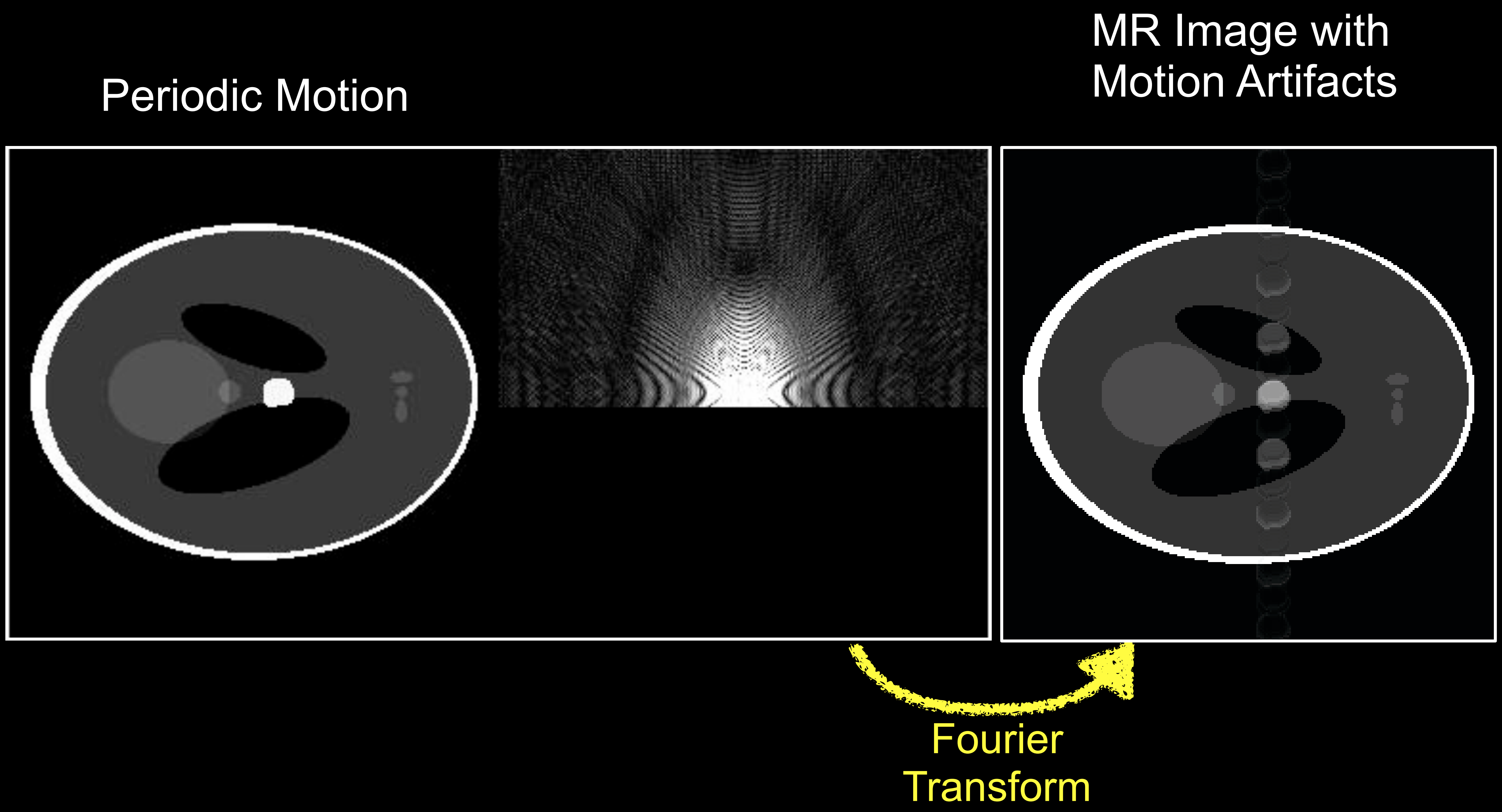
Periodic Motion



Examples:

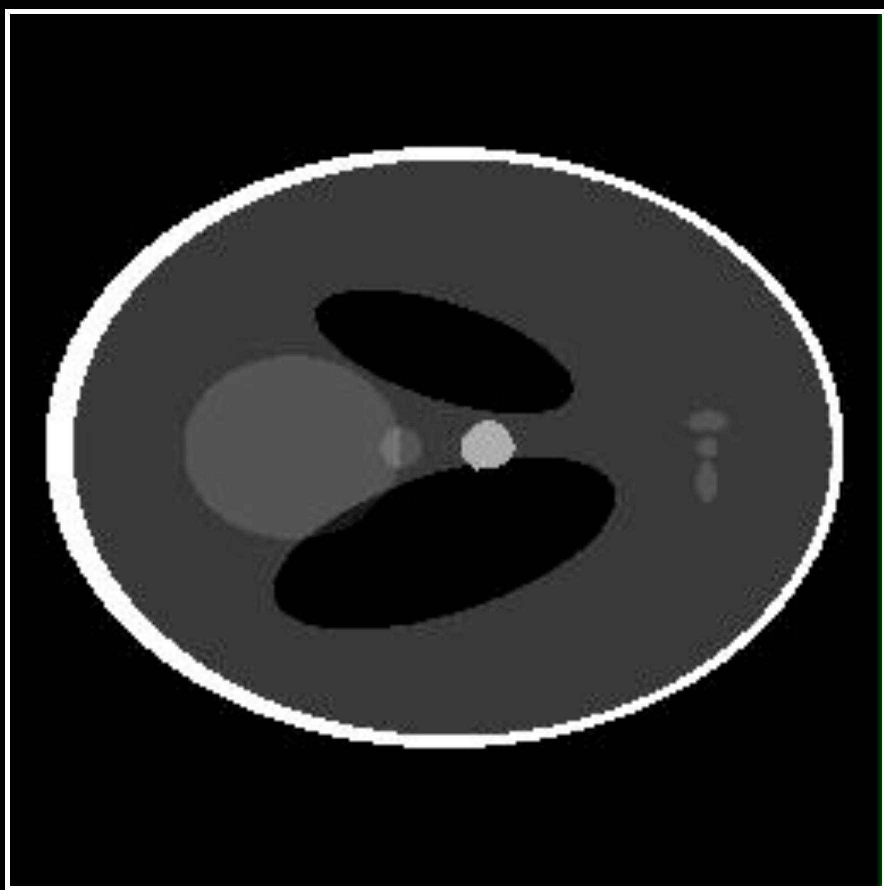
- Aortic Pulsation
- Arterial Pulsation

Motion Artifacts - Part II

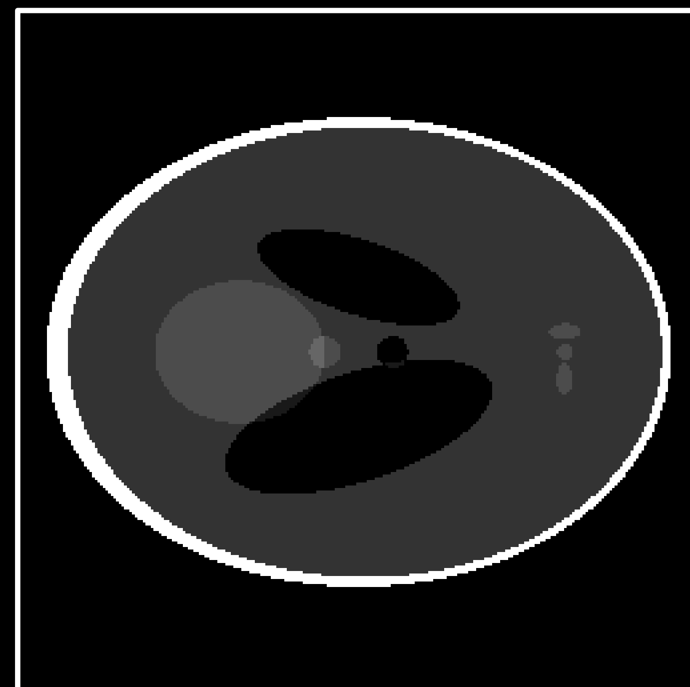


Motion Artifacts - Part II

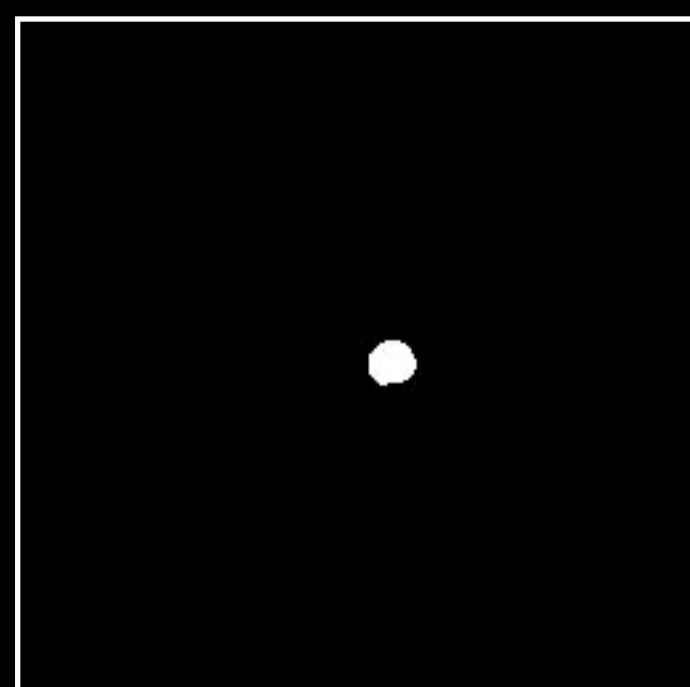
Periodic Motion



Static Part

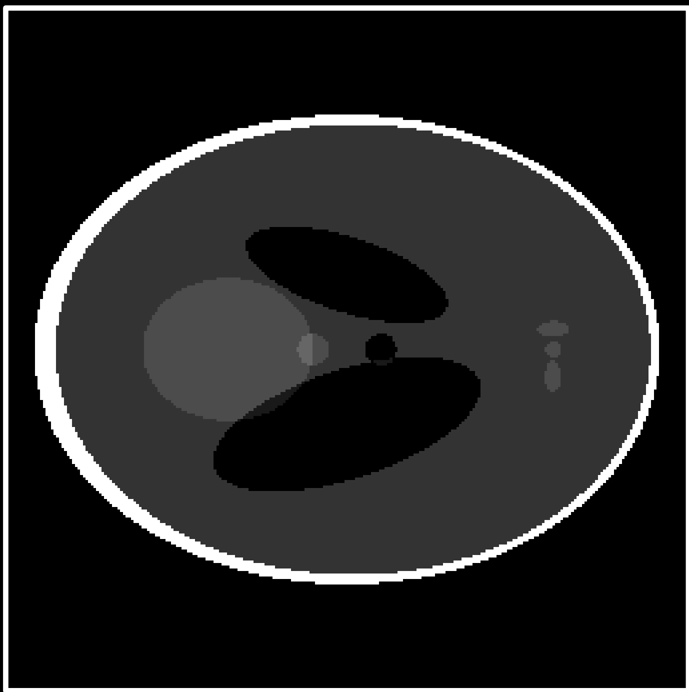


Moving Part

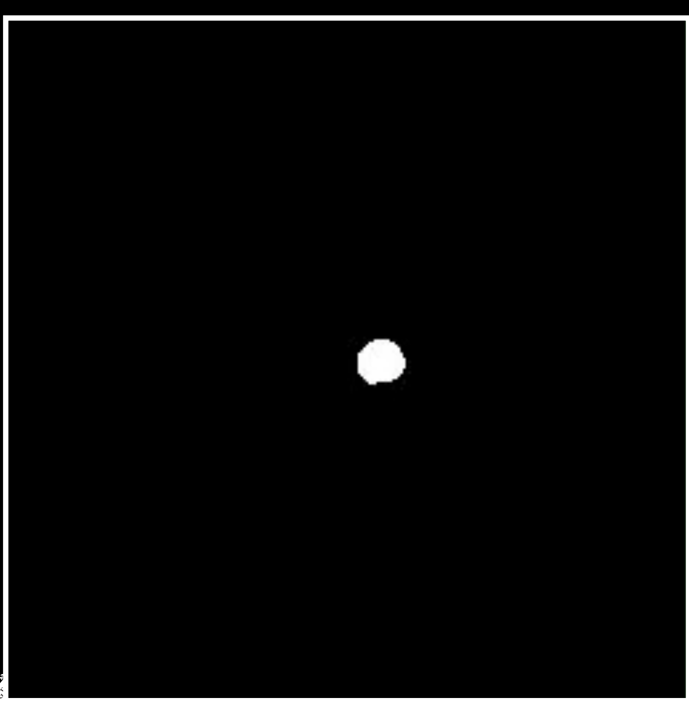


Motion Artifacts - Part II

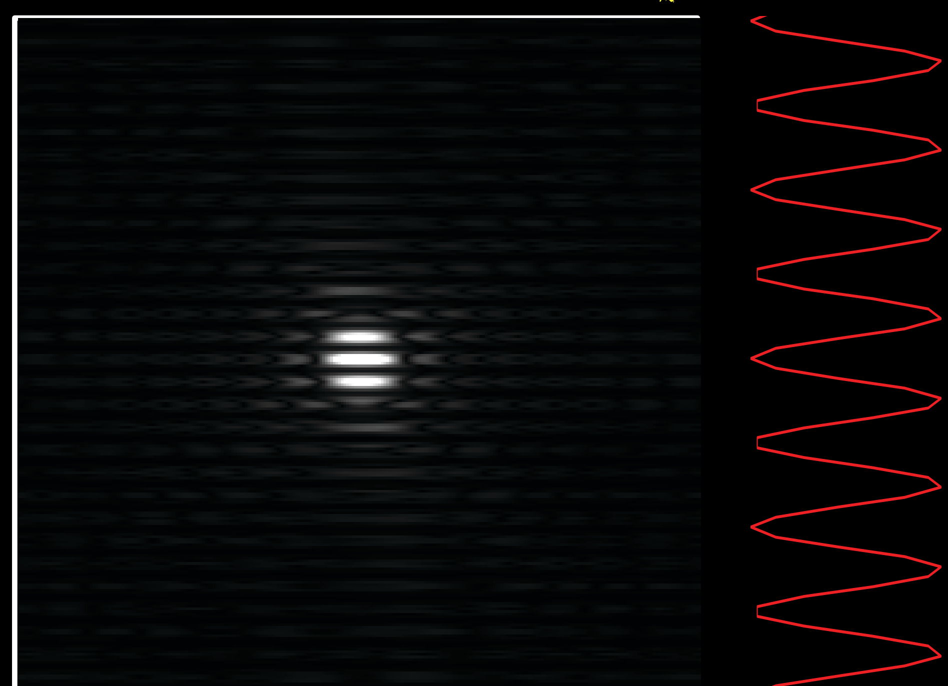
Static Part

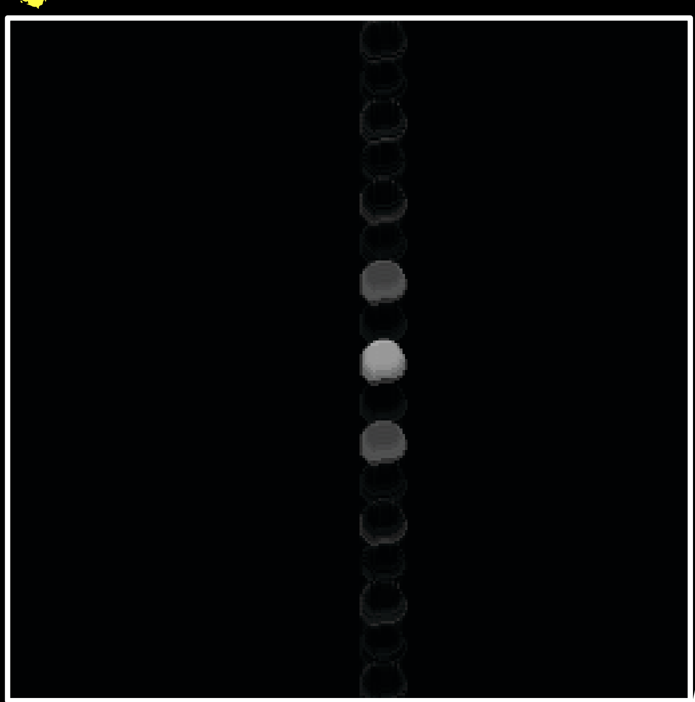


Moving Part



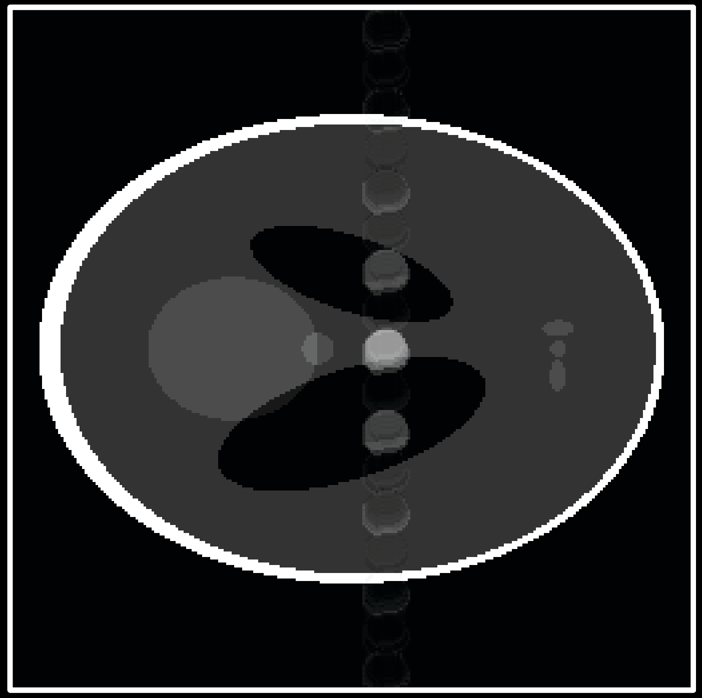
Fourier Transform



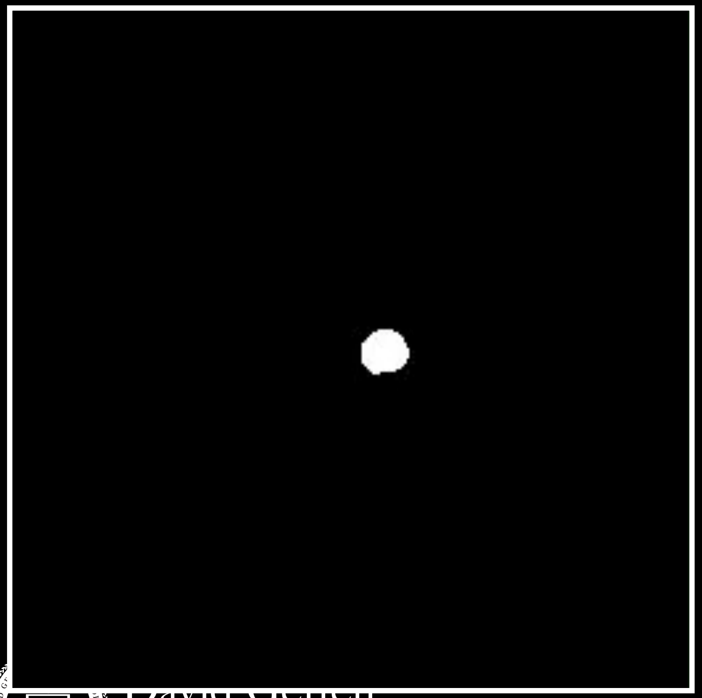


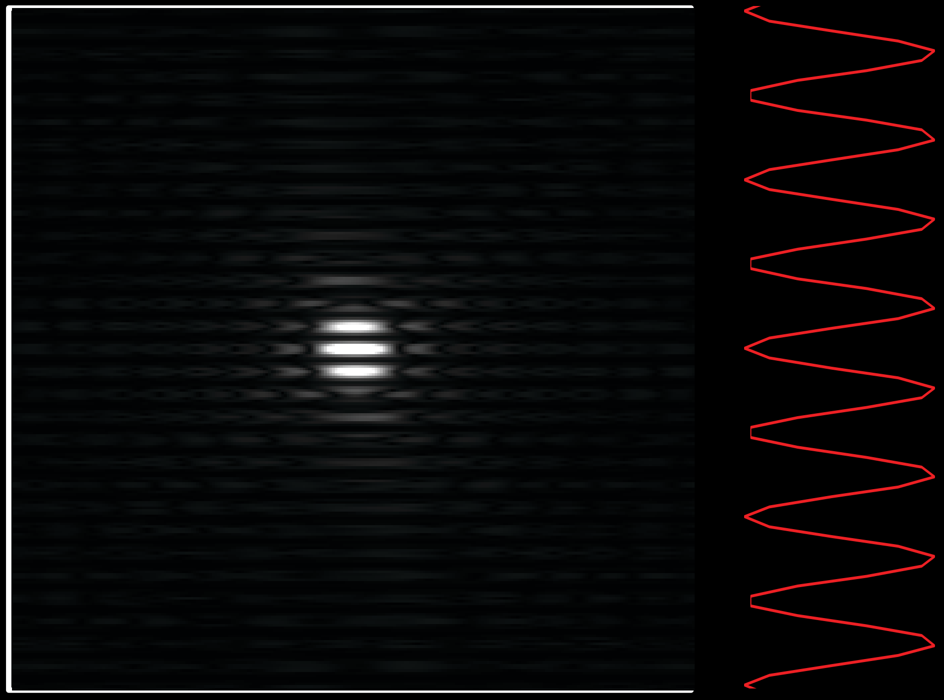
Motion Artifacts - Part II

MR Image with
Ghosting Artifacts



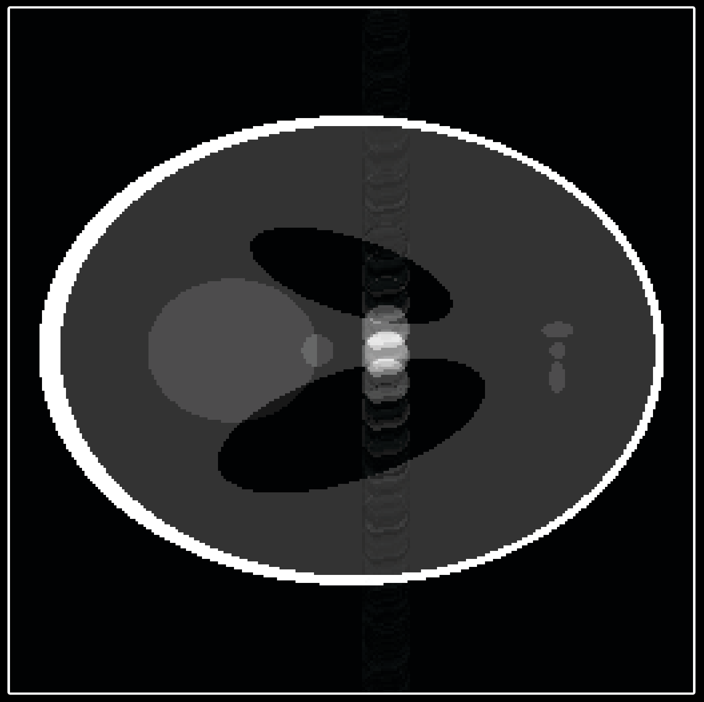
Moving Part



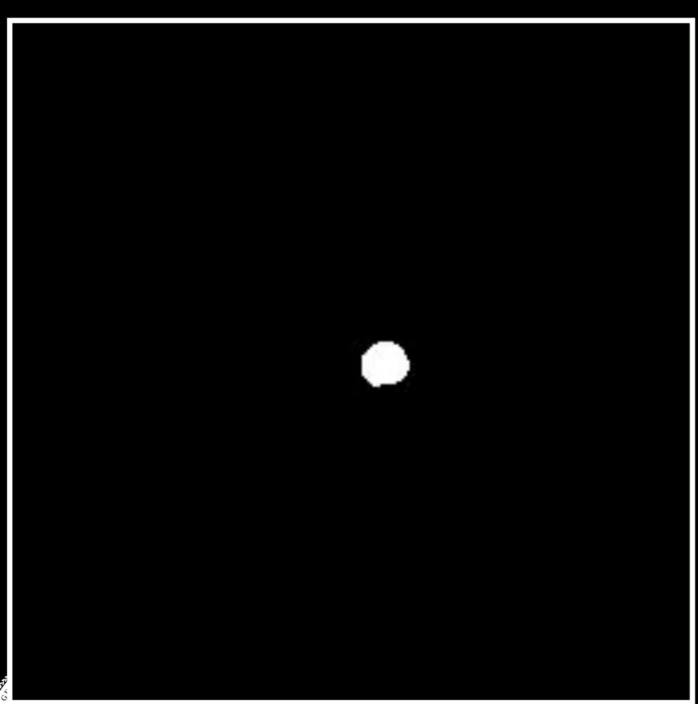


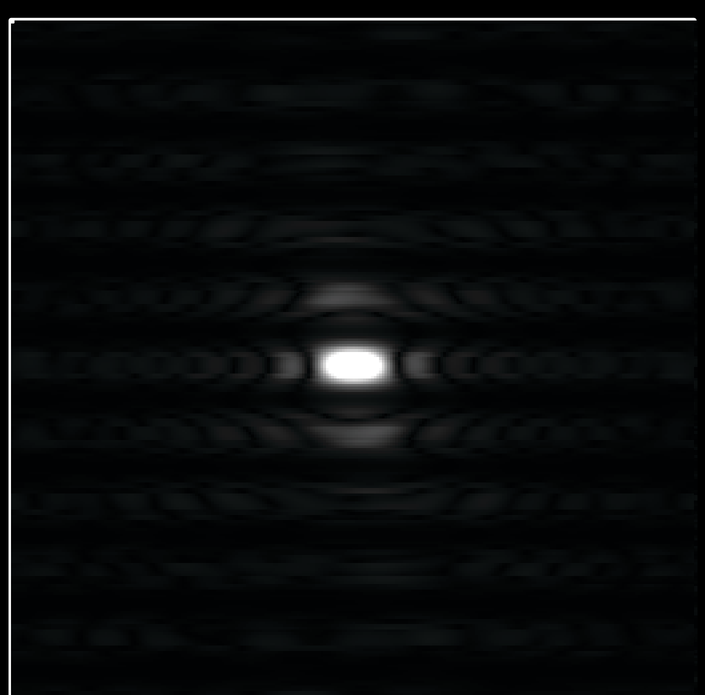
Motion Artifacts - Part II

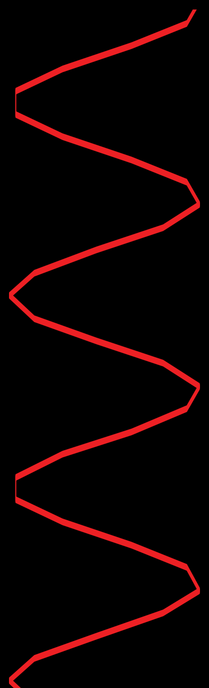
MR Image with
Ghosting Artifacts



Moving Part





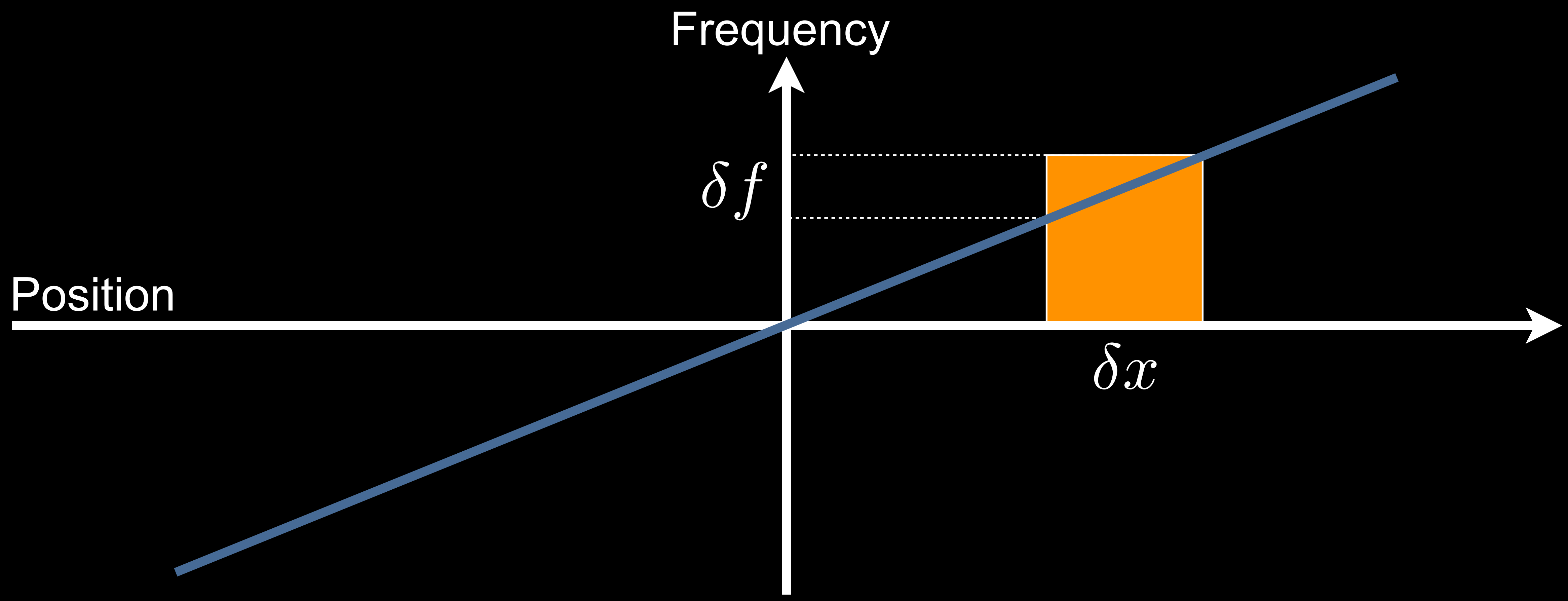


Remedies (and Penalties)

- **Possible solutions?**
  - Cardiac gating ± segmented imaging.
  - Signal suppression of moving tissues.
  - Swapping phase-encoding and frequency encoding directions
- **Disadvantages**
  - Increases scan time.
  - Increases TR (due to preparation pulses).
  - Only shifts the artifacts.
- **Other strategies**
  - Non-Cartesian sampling
  - Motion-compensated reconstruction

Metal Artifacts

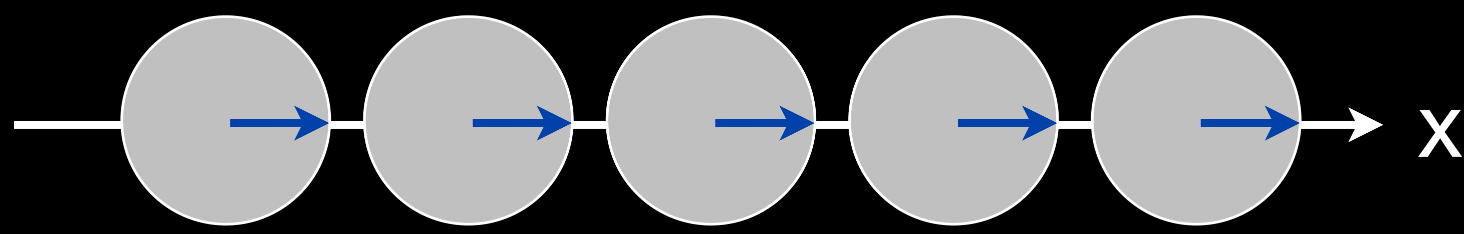
Frequency Encoding Artifacts



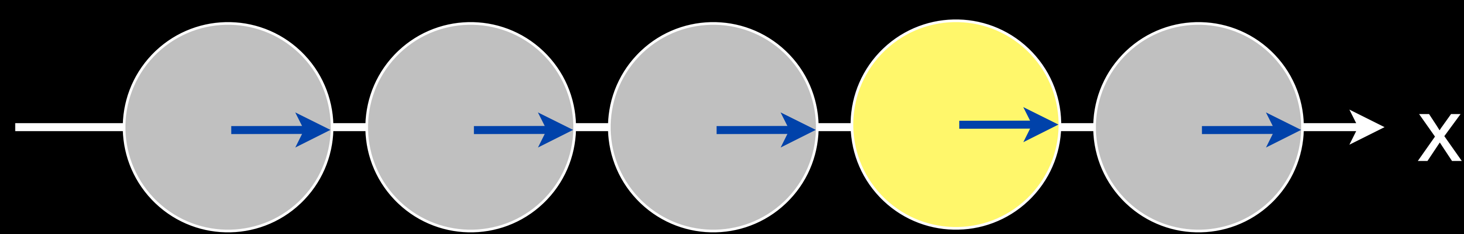
$$\delta x = \frac{2\pi\delta f}{\gamma G_x}$$

Severe Off-Resonance

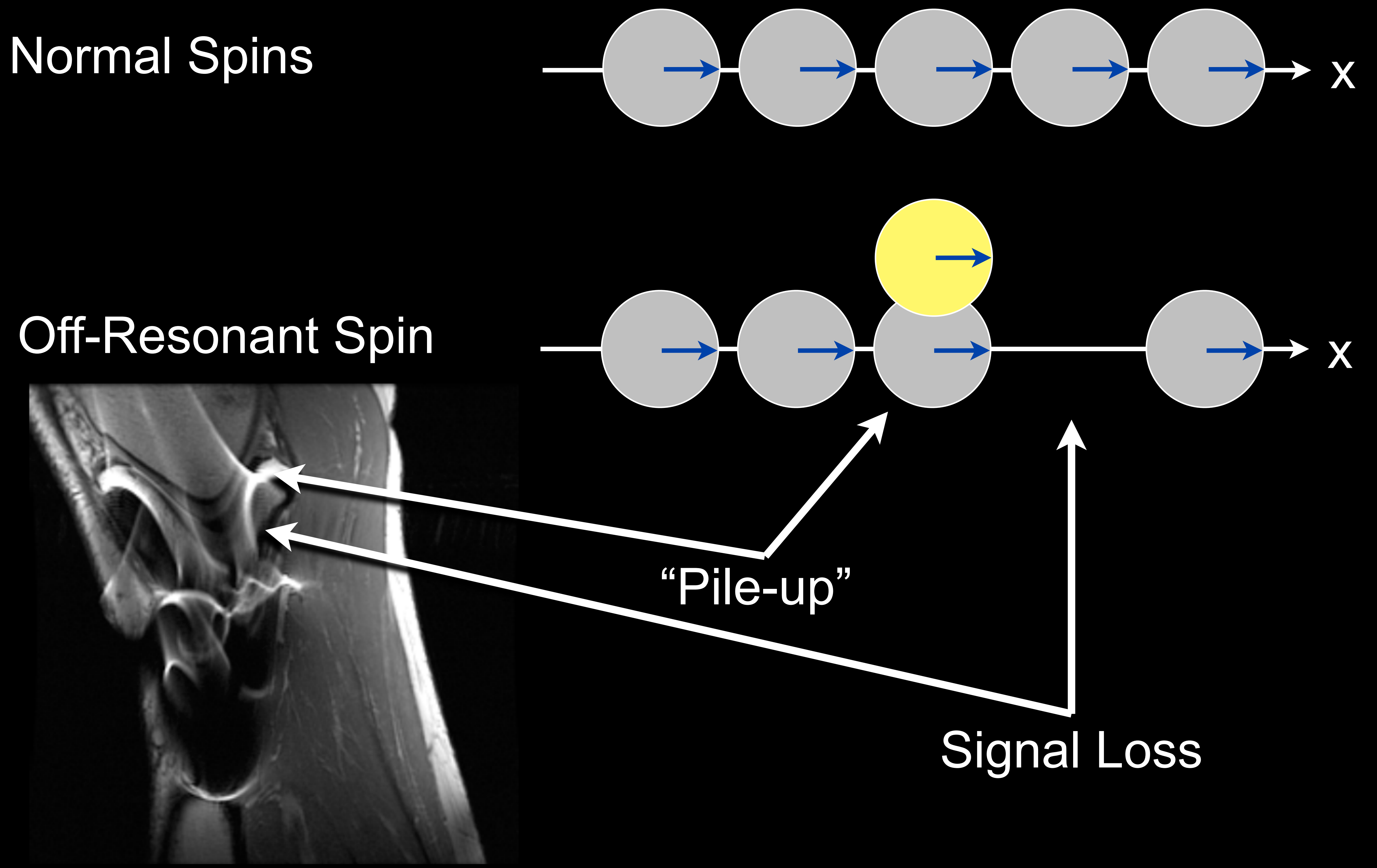
Normal Spins



Off-Resonant Spin



Severe Off-Resonance

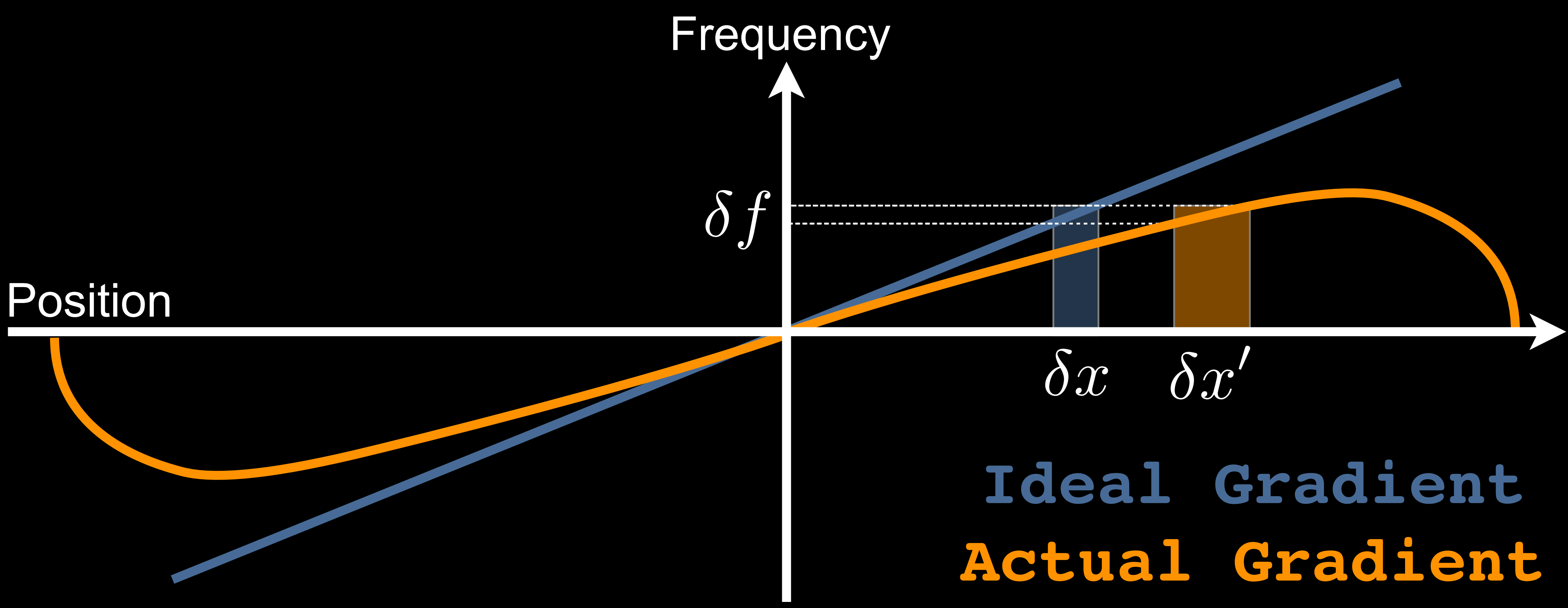


Gradient Nonlinearity

Gradient Non-linearity

- Basic ***assumption*** in MRI is that the z-component of the B-field created by the gradient coils varies ***linearly*** with x, y, or z over the FOV.
- Higher gradient amplitudes and slewrates can be achieved by compromising on spatial linearity.
- Gradient non-linearity causes geometric ***and*** intensity distortions.

Gradient Non-linearity

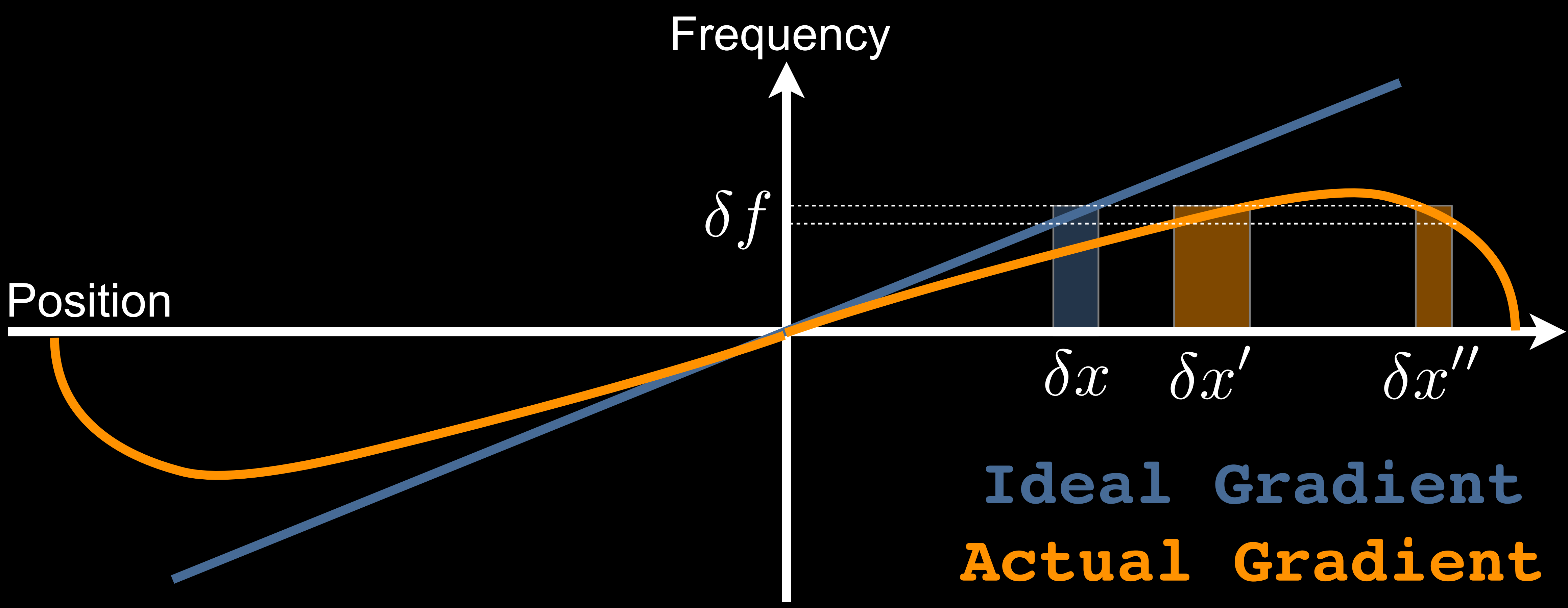


The mapping between position (x) and frequency (f) becomes non-linear.
The mapping between Δx and Δf becomes non-linear.

Gradient Non-linearity

Image Courtesy of M.T. Alley & B.A. Hargeaves

Gradient Roll-off



Spins outside the desired FOV, if excited and near to the coil can become spatially mis-encoded.

Solution

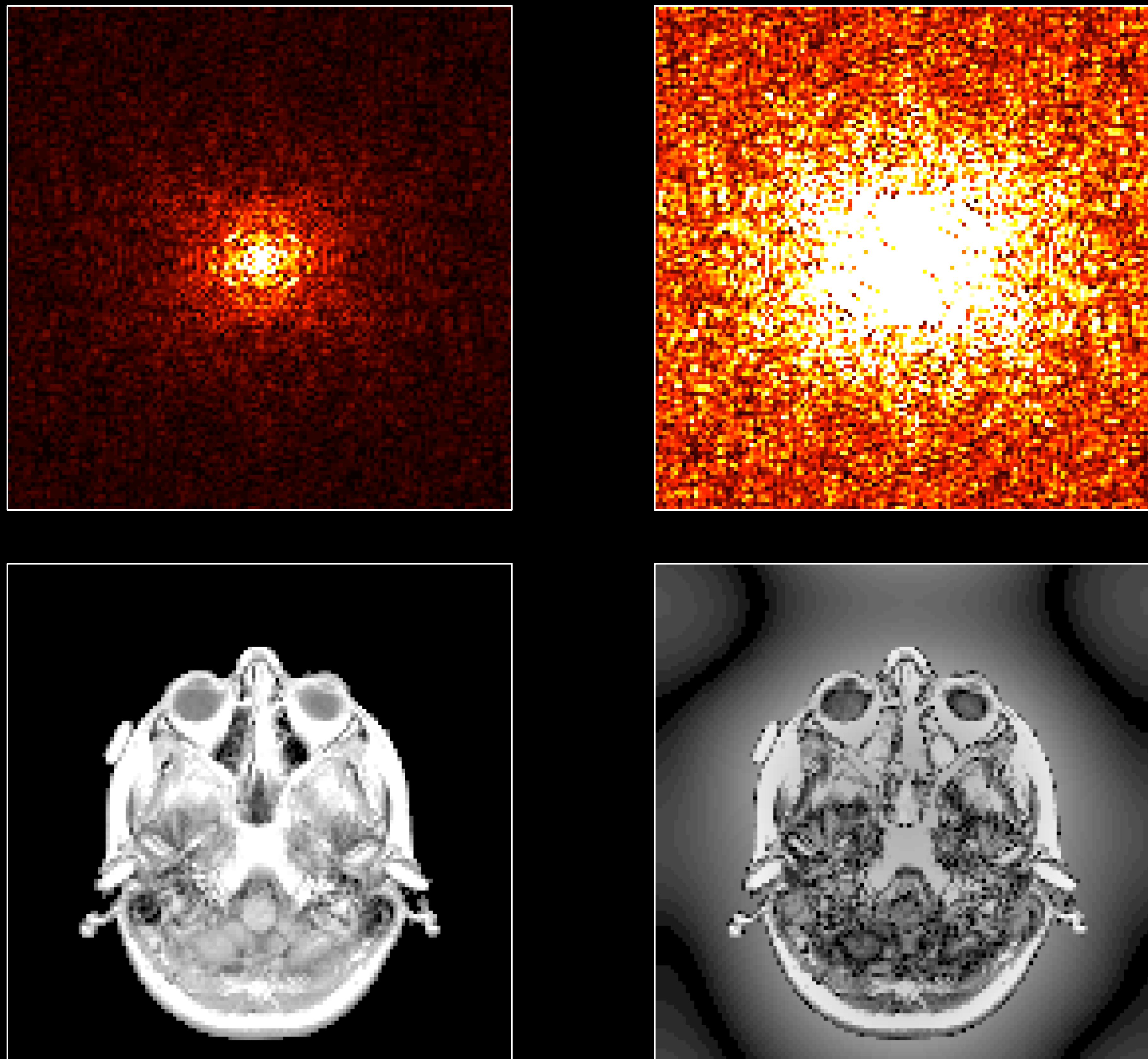
- **Image warping parameters that are system specific and applied to all images.**
  - **Works well qualitatively.**
  - **Can be problematic quantitatively.**
- **Transmit (B_1) coils with coverage over smaller volumes.**
- **Receiver coil (B_r) sensitivity only over ROI.**

Data Clipping

Data Clipping

- **Received signal saturates the receiver.**
- **Peak signal usually in the middle of *k*-space, therefore lose low spatial frequency information:**
  - **Contrast**
  - **Intensity**
- **Pre-scan procedure usually avoids data clipping by adjusting receiver gains.**

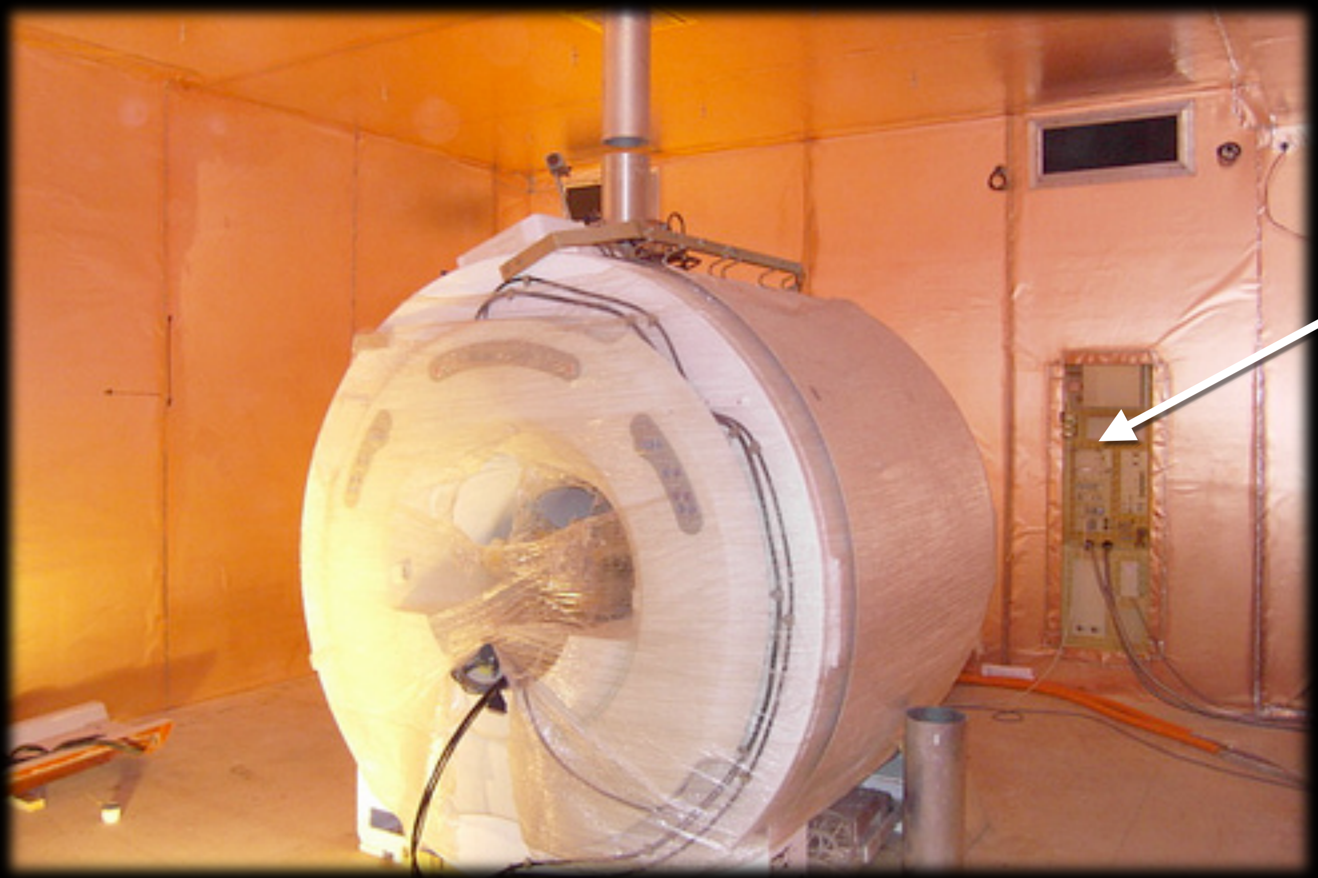
Data Clipping



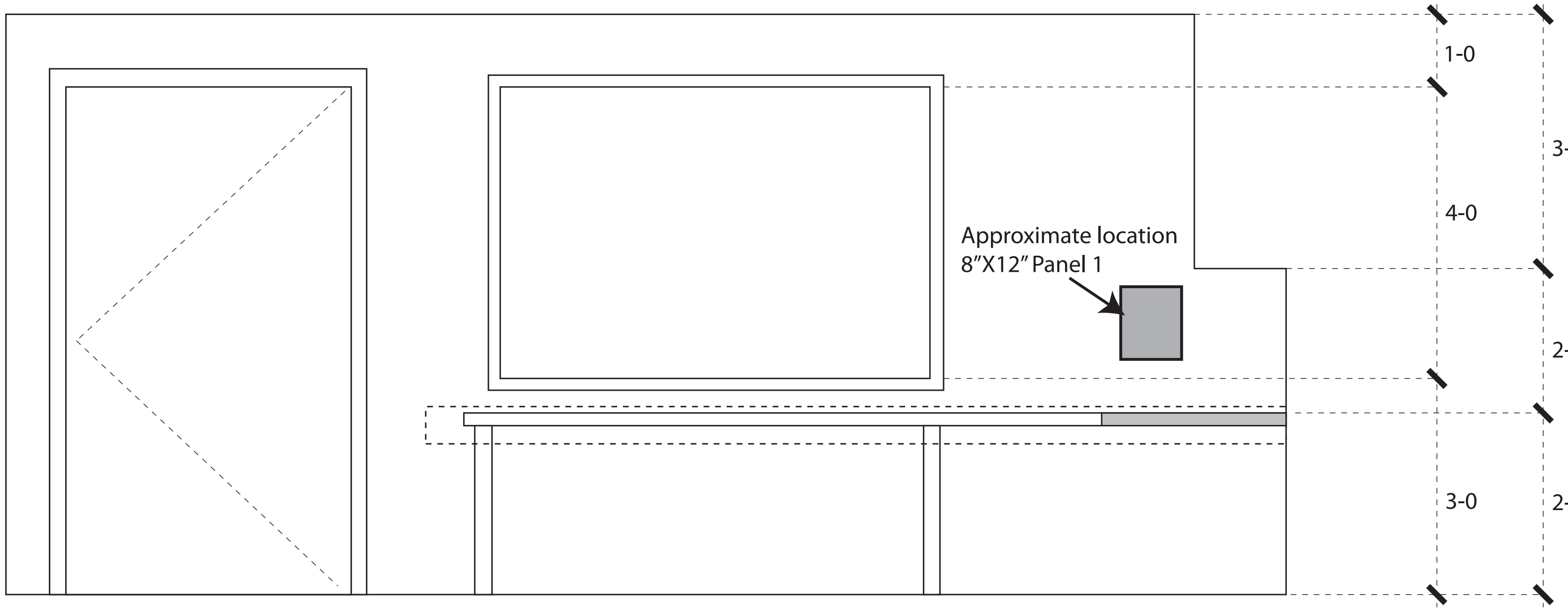
RF Interference

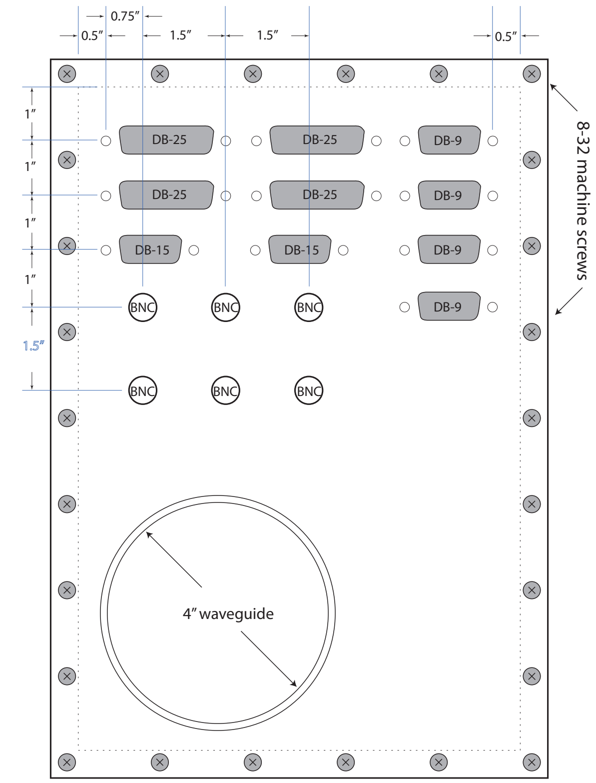
RF Shielding

- RF fields are close to FM radio
  - ^{1}H @ 1.5T ⇒ 63.85 MHz
  - ^{1}H @ 3.0T ⇒ 127.71 MHz
  - KROQ ⇒ 106.7 MHz
- Need to shield local sources from interfering
- Copper room shielding required



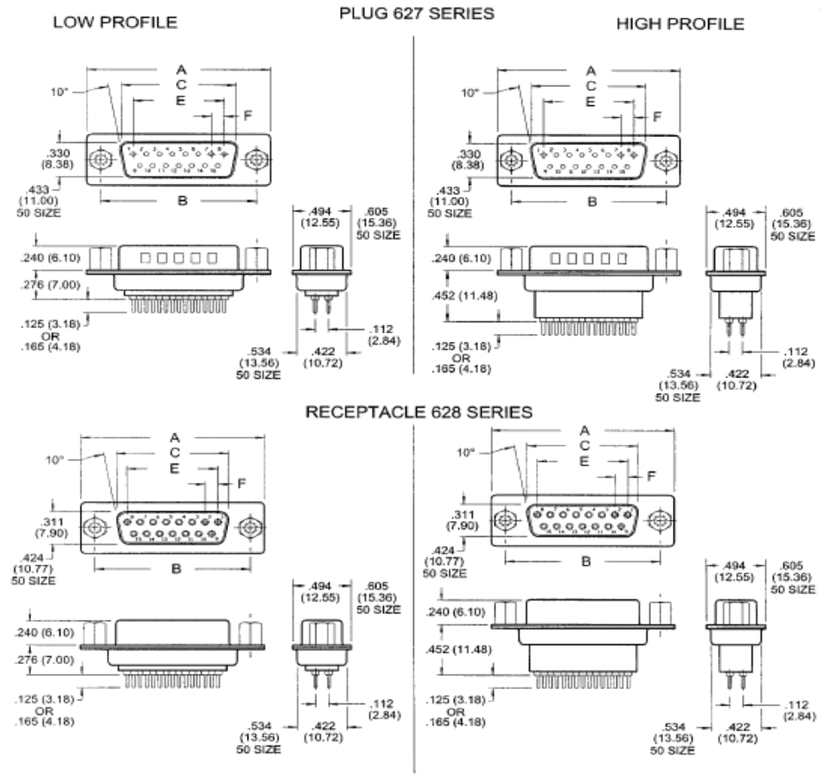
Penetration Panel





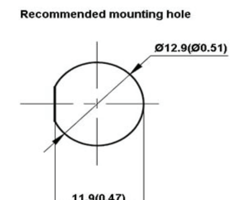
Panel 1 - between scan room and console room

8" X 12" penetration (panel size is 9" X 13")



NUMBER OF CONTACTS	A Inch	A (mm)	B Inch	B (mm)	C PLUG Inch	C PLUG (mm)	C RECEPTACLE Inch	C RECEPTACLE (mm)	E Inch	E (mm)	F Inch	F (mm)
9	1.214	(30.84)	.984	(24.99)	.667	(16.92)	.640	(16.26)	.432	(10.97)	.108	(2.74)
15	1.545	(39.24)	1.312	(33.32)	.994	(25.25)	.967	(24.56)	.756	(19.20)	.108	(2.74)
25	2.088	(53.04)	1.852	(47.04)	1.534	(38.96)	1.508	(38.30)	1.304	(33.12)	.109	(2.76)
37	2.730	(69.34)	2.500	(63.50)	2.182	(53.08)	2.156	(54.76)	1.956	(49.68)	.109	(2.76)
50	2.640	(67.05)	2.406	(61.11)	2.080	(52.83)	2.054	(52.17)	1.740	(44.20)	.109	(2.76)

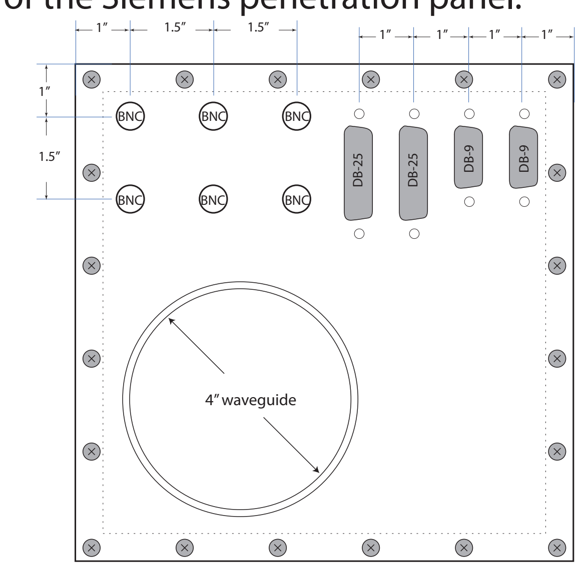
DB cutout dimensions



BNC Hole Dimensions

Penetration panels should
be made from 16 ga. steel or aluminum

Location of Panel 2 is to be in the proximity of the Siemens penetration panel.



8" Penetration (panel size is 9")

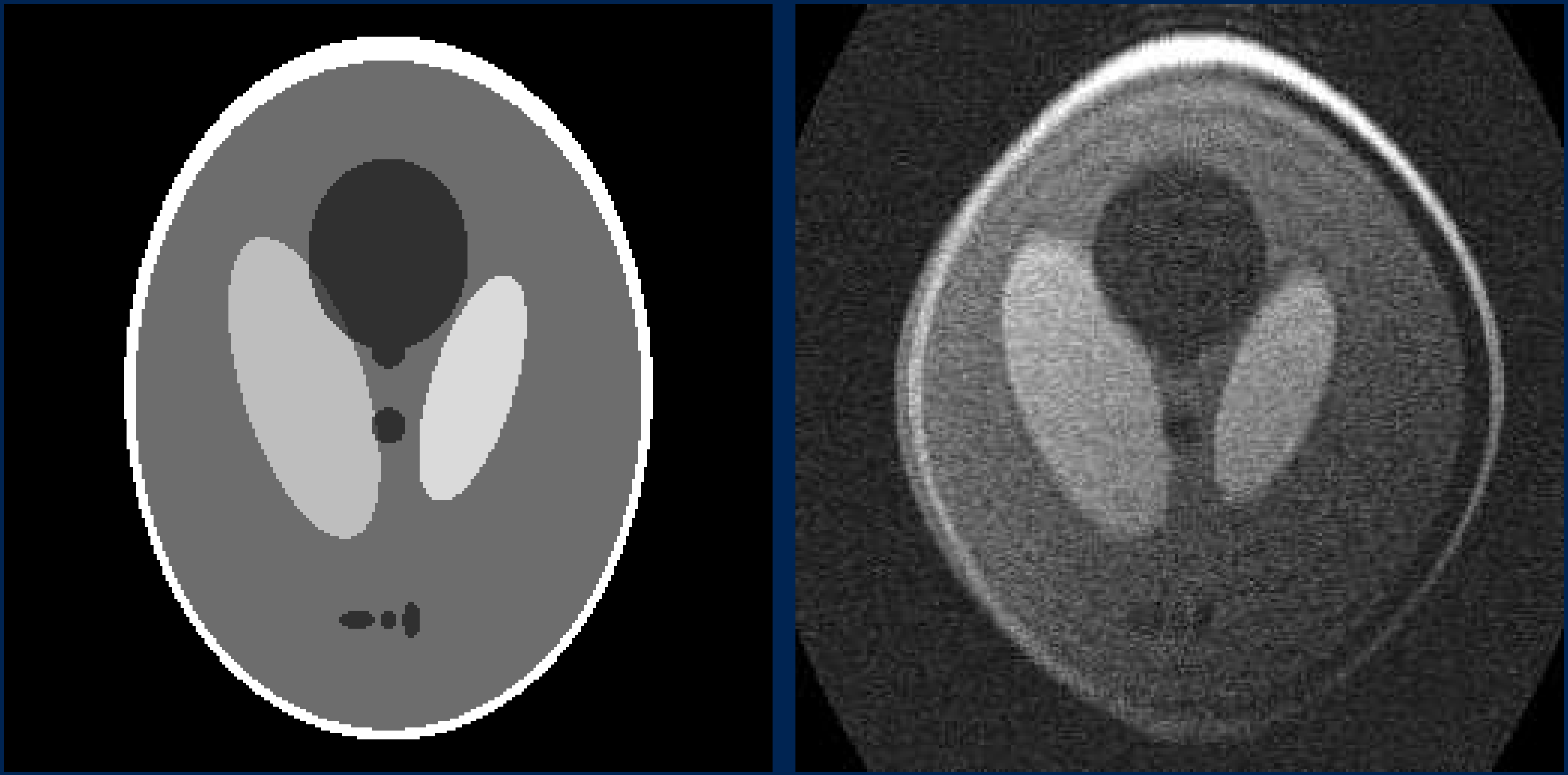
Panel 2 - between equipment room and scan room

Radiofrequency Interference

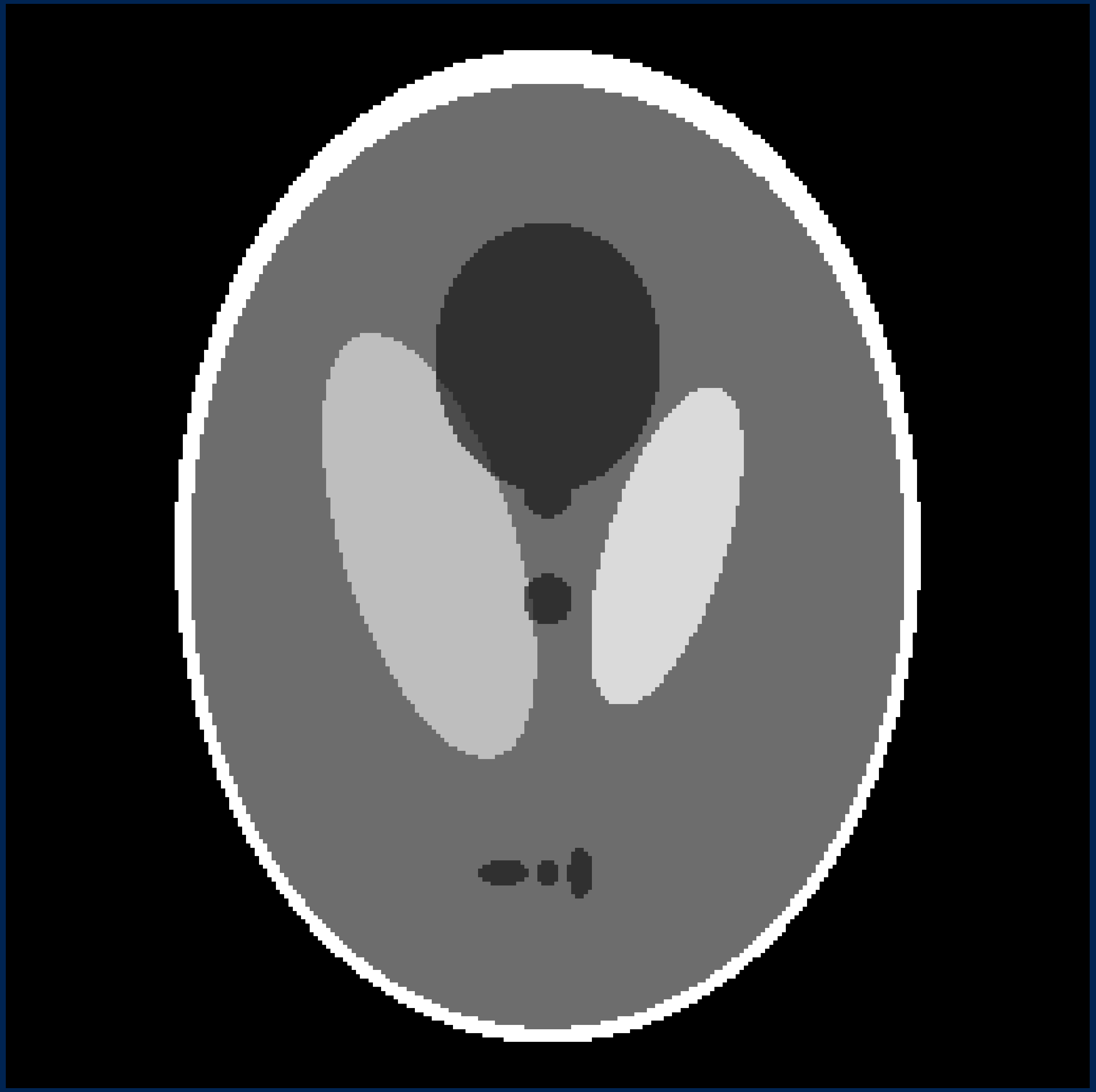
- **Caused by RF leak**
  - **Scanner Door is Open**
  - **Wires running in/out of scan room**
  - **Faulty Room Shielding**

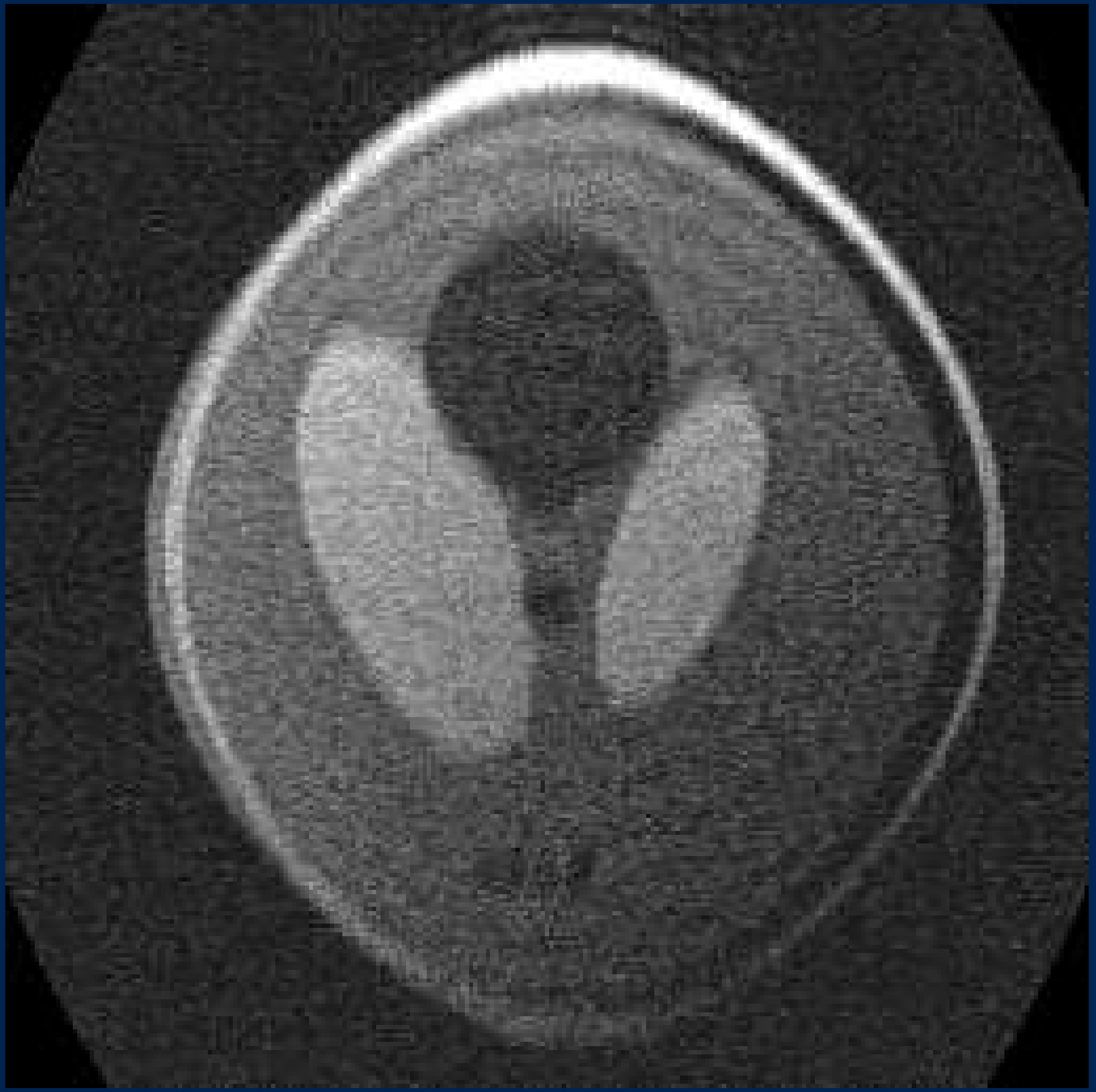
Images Courtesy of http://chickscope.beckman.uiuc.edu/roosts/carl/artifacts.html

How many artifacts can you see?



How many artifacts can you see?





Noise
Gradient Distortion
Gibb's Ringing
Chemical Shift
Coil shading

Thanks!

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  - Dr. Daniel Ennis
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- Next quarter: M229

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http://mrrl.ucla.edu/wulab