



Ultrasound Scan



What is an ultrasound scan?

An ultrasound scan is a common procedure that uses high frequency sound waves to create images of the organs, blood vessels and soft tissue inside the body. It can provide accurate information about the size, shape and structure of these different parts.

How ultrasound works

A small device called an ultrasound probe is used, which produces high-frequency sound waves.

You can't hear these sound waves, but when they reflect off different parts of the body, they create "echoes". These echoes are then received by the probe and turned into a moving image.

This image is displayed on a monitor while the scan is being performed.

Are there any risks?

An ultrasound scan is a very commonly used method of imaging and has no known harmful effects on humans.

What are the benefits?

It is a safe, painless and simple way of assessing the organs inside your body in order to investigate the symptoms you may be having.

Preparing for an ultrasound scan

Before having some types of ultrasound scan, you may be asked to follow certain instructions to help improve the quality of the examination.

For example, you may be advised to:

- **drink water and not go to the toilet until after the scan** – this may be needed for an examination of your pelvic area
- **avoid eating or drinking for several hours before the scan** – this may be needed before a scan of your abdomen, including the liver and gallbladder

Any preparation required will be detailed in your appointment letter. Depending on the area of your body being examined, you may be asked to move or remove some clothing and wear a gown.

What happens during an ultrasound scan?

You will be called into the scan room and your identity will be checked. You will be asked to move or remove some clothing and then to lie down on an examination couch. The lights will be dimmed to allow the sonographer a clearer view of the screen.

Gel will be spread over the area of your body being examined and the sonographer will place a hand-held probe onto your skin. By moving the probe, the sonographer can obtain the necessary views of your organs.

You may be asked to hold your breath or change position at times, to enable some areas to be seen more clearly. Selected images are saved as a record of the examination.

An ultrasound examination should not be painful, but some patients may occasionally find a little discomfort from the pressure of the probe over certain areas.

What happens after your ultrasound scan?

You can eat and drink normally after your examination. The clinician who performed your scan will review the images and prepare a report from the findings. Your diagnostic report will be sent to your referring GP or specialist within a few days of your scan.

Giving your consent for the procedure

This information leaflet is intended to provide you with an overview of the ultrasound scan procedure. Prior to any medical examination being carried out, the sonographer will describe the nature of the examination. It is your right to be given sufficient information to be able to make any informed decision as to whether you wish to continue with the examination.

Further information

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Ultrasound-scan/>



All enquiries:



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healthshare.org.uk

Important Information

This is a general patient information leaflet only.

The information you are given may be different to that provided here. This is because the information given to you is tailor made to your individual treatment.

It is very important that you follow the instructions that are given by your clinician.



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