

Radiology

Ultrasound scan - Abdomen and pelvis

What is an ultrasound scan?

An ultrasound scan is a procedure that uses sound waves to produce images of certain parts of the body. It does not involve X-rays.

An ultrasound scan is performed by a specially trained sonographer or a radiologist (imaging doctor). It requires the use of gel and is a safe procedure.

What happens in the ultrasound scan?

The scan takes place in a darkened room. We will ask you to lie on an examination couch.

A small amount of gel will be put onto your skin over the area to be examined. A probe is moved over this area by the sonographer or radiologist. The images will appear on a monitor.

We will ensure that your privacy and dignity are maintained at all times.



What do I have to before I attend?

- **Do not eat any food for 6 hours before your appointment time.**
- **Drink 2 pints (1 litre) of clear fluid, preferably water (not milk or fizzy drinks), 1 hour before your appointment time.**

If you're worried about travelling with a full bladder, please arrive one hour before your appointment time. We can provide water for you to drink.

It's important you follow these instructions. If you have eaten, or your bladder is not full, your examination may have to be rescheduled.

If you take regular medication (**excluding diabetic medication**), please take it at the usual time.

Diabetic patients

If you have diabetes, you should have received an early morning appointment.

If not, please contact the Department on the telephone number found on the appointment letter. Ask to speak to the outpatient ultrasound appointment administrator. They will rearrange your appointment time to the next appropriate and available appointment.

Do not take your diabetic tablets or insulin but bring them with you. You also may want to bring a snack with you to eat after your examination.

Patients referred for an internal pelvic scan (over 16 years)

An additional ultrasound scan is often offered to **female patients** over the age of 16. This is called a transvaginal, or an internal, ultrasound scan. This is so the female pelvic organs can be seen more clearly.

Patient Information

The examination can be performed on patients over 16 years old who have not had sexual intercourse. These patients should be aware that, if clinically appropriate, they can be referred for alternative imaging if they choose to decline an internal scan.

An internal ultrasound does not take long and should be painless.

An internal ultrasound examination will only be performed if you consent to it. It is your choice.

An internal ultrasound scan can be performed anytime during your menstrual cycle. If you are bleeding at the time of your appointment, this will not affect the scan.

This examination can be performed at any stage, over 16 years old, of a patient's life. It may be performed by a male or female sonographer/radiologist. **You have the choice to decline an internal scan.**

What happens during the internal scan?

If you consent to an internal scan, you will be given a hospital gown and asked to undress from the waist down. You will be given privacy to do this.

You will be asked to lie on the examination couch and often a cushion will be placed underneath you to raise the hips into a good scanning position.

The internal scan involves inserting a clean, covered, slim probe gently into the vagina. The probe is then gently moved to see the organs.

What happens when you arrive

Please report to the reception desk when you arrive at the Radiology/X-Ray Department. From here, we will direct you to one of our waiting areas.

We want to make you feel welcome and make your visit as pleasant as possible. If you feel unhappy with any part of your care, please ask to speak to the Department Lead.

Patient Information

Results

The radiologist/sonographer will send a report to your GP or specialist consultant.

More information

For more information, go to: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Ultrasound-scan/>

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the number on your appointment letter and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.



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