Radiology / Ultrasound Patient Information Leaflet

Gynaecological Pelvic and Transvaginal Ultrasound Scan

What is an Ultrasound Scan?

Sound travels in waves. Ultrasound is a soundwave, which travels at a higher frequency than we can hear.

Ultrasound machines form pictures by listening to how these sound waves interact with the different surfaces (tissues) within the human body. These ultrasound waves are sent into the body by moving a transducer over the surface of the skin. The pictures produced are interpreted by a practitioner, usually a sonographer or radiologist, who is highly trained in this speciality.

Ultrasound scans can be used to diagnose a variety of conditions.

Pelvic ultrasound scans can monitor changes in the uterus (womb) and the ovaries. There are two ways of performing a pelvic scan:

Transabdominal Ultrasound Scan (TAS)

For this type of scan you will be asked to drink water to fill your bladder. The ultrasound probe is placed on the skin in the lower part of your tummy. This type of scan may be enough to gain all the information required, however sometimes a transvaginal scan will be offered if we need to gain more detailed information.

Transvaginal Ultrasound Scan (TVUS)

For this type of scan you will be asked to empty your bladder. You will be asked to remove your underwear for the examination and you will be covered by a sheet to maintain dignity and privacy. A special slim probe is placed into the vagina. The vaginal probe is cleaned before use, covered with a protective sheath, and lubricated with sterile jelly to make its insertion into the vagina easier and more comfortable. The probe is inserted very gently into the vagina. It is usually a painless procedure and will feel very similar to having an internal examination (but no speculum is used).

This examination can be performed at any time of life – in pregnancy, during menstruation (period) or after the menopause.

If you have any questions about the procedure, please discuss this with the staff performing the examination or contact the booking team on Tel: xxxx xxx who will arrange for a member of the clinical team to contact you prior to your appointment.

Giving my consent

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. The sonographer/radiologist will ask you if you are happy for the scan to go ahead. This is called verbal consent. If you do not wish to have the scan or are undecided, please tell the sonographer/radiologist. It is your decision and you can change your mind at any time.

Students/trainees may be present during the examination. Please alert a healthcare professional before the scan begins if you do not wish them to be present. However, a trained chaperone may be present for the examination to support your wellbeing and assist the sonographer/radiologist.

Please remember that you can ask the sonographer/radiologist any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan. If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

Are there any risks?

The procedure is considered to be very safe.

Please inform the staff prior to the procedure if you have a latex allergy.

Will I feel any pain?

You cannot feel ultrasound waves, however, it is important for the sonographer/radiologist to examine you in the correct position and to gently press down on the probe to get a good view. For some people this may be minimally uncomfortable. If you do feel discomfort please inform the sonographer/radiologist, so that suitable adjustments can be made or the examination can be ceased.

What happens after the scan?

If you are having the ultrasound scan as an outpatient you will be able to return home immediately, providing that no other tests are required. You may eat, drink and resume normal activities (including sexual intercourse) as soon as you wish. The results will be sent to your GP/referring doctor within a few days. At your next GP/outpatient appointment, you will be able to discuss the results and any subsequent treatment which may be necessary.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns about your upcoming ultrasound scan, please contact Ultrasound Appointments Team on XXXX XXX XXX

Comments & Concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Email : Address: Text: