

What is ultrasound?

Diagnostic ultrasound is a special imaging procedure using high frequency sound waves rather than X-rays to make pictures. These sound waves cannot be felt or heard.

What special instructions do I need to follow to be ready for my ultrasound examination?

The ultrasound being performed is a diagnostic test. Only one person will be allowed to join you in the ultrasound room. The sonographer (ultrasound technologist) will decide when to allow this visitation and may limit it to only the final portion of the study appointment.

Children will not be allowed as this is a medical examination requiring the Sonographer to concentrate.

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible. Should you be admitted to hospital, please inform your physician about your appointment.

1st TRIMESTER PREGNANCY:

- You need to make sure your bladder is full for the exam: full, but not in pain. One and a half hours before the test empty your bladder. Then drink 32 oz/4 cups/1 litre of water or other clear, non-carbonated liquid and finishing 1 hour before the test. Do not go to the washroom. If you have a catheter, it must be clamped off BEFORE you start to drink. If you are in pain while you are waiting for the ultrasound, you can urinate a bit, but your bladder still needs to be full.
- You may eat and take medications.

2nd or 3rd TRIMESTER PREGNANCY:

- You need to make sure your bladder is full for the exam: full, but not in pain. One and a half hours before the test empty your bladder. Then drink 16 oz/2cups/500ml of water or other clear, non-carbonated liquid and finishing 1 hour before the test. Do not go to the washroom. If you have a catheter, it must be clamped off BEFORE you start to drink. If you are in pain while you are waiting for the ultrasound, you can urinate a bit, but your bladder still needs to be full...
- You may eat and take medications.

BIOPHYSICAL PROFILE:

- Within 1/2 hour of your exam, drink sweetened juice or pop.
- You may eat and take medications.

Please do not use perfume or other scented products on the day of your study.

Who will be performing my examination?

A Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer will perform the examination. A Radiologist may come in near the end of your examination to review the examination with the sonographer.

What will happen to me during my examination?

When you arrive in the Diagnostic Imaging Department, you will be taken to a darkened ultrasound room. The sonographer will ask you to lie down on an imaging stretcher.

The Sonographer will spread a warm gel on the area of your body to be examined. A small instrument called a "probe" or "transducer" will be placed in contact with the skin over the areas of interest and be moved slowly across it. This instrument sends and receives soundwaves that a computer uses to make pictures. These pictures will be seen by the sonographer on a monitor and they will become part of your digital records.

During the examination, it may be necessary for the sonographer to push on the probe against the area of interest. You may also be asked to take deep breaths and/or hold your breath. Your examination will take between 30 - 60 minutes.

Should I expect any after effects as a result of my examination?

Ultrasound has been used to evaluate pregnancy for more than four decades and there has been no evidence of harm to the patient, embryo or fetus. Nevertheless, ultrasound should be performed only when clinically indicated.

Depending on the amount of pressure that was used to get a good picture, you may experience temporary tenderness over the area(s) looked at.

You may immediately eat, drink and perform normal activities.

When will I know the results?

Your Health Care Provider will usually have a written report from the radiologist within one week of your examination. You should obtain the results from your own physician. If there is any urgency, your Health Care Provider is more than welcome to contact the Diagnostic Imaging Department by telephone.

If you have any other questions or concerns that have not been answered here, please feel free to ask the Diagnostic Imaging staff involved in your examination.