

Patient Information Sheet Abdomen and Pelvis Ultrasound

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?

1. 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.
2. Please do not use perfume or other scented products on the day of your study.
3. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your appointment and check in at Patient Registration
4. You must not eat, chew gum or smoke for six hours prior to your examination. If you are a diabetic, you can have some fruit juice, if needed.
5. 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.
6. You may take your medications.

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 the 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 45 - 60 minutes.

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

There are no known side effects from an ultrasound examination. 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 Health Care Provider. 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.