

## **Ultrasound scan**

**An ultrasound scan** is an examination of the body using sound waves, not x-rays. The high-frequency sound waves are transmitted through your skin and reflect or “bounce” off the internal parts of your body producing a picture on a screen.

### **Reasons for having an ultrasound**

There are many parts of the body that can be checked by an ultrasound including the liver, thyroid gland, gallbladder, ovaries, bladder, prostate gland and kidneys. It is a safe and completely painless examination.

### **Preparation**

If you have insurance, please ensure that you bring your policy number and have obtained an authorisation number. You will need this when you register

Your preparation will vary depending on which part of your body is to be scanned.

- **If you are having an ultrasound of your thyroid, breasts, leg or testicles**, there is no preparation needed.
- **If you are having an ultrasound scan of your upper abdomen**, for example the gallbladder, liver, pancreas, or spleen, you may be asked to stop eating for 4 hours before your appointment (**If you have diabetes please phone for advice**)
- **If you are having an ultrasound of your lower abdomen (pelvis)**, for example the bladder, prostate, uterus, or kidneys, you may be asked to drink two pints of clear fluid in the one hour before your appointment and try not to go to the toilet! It is only possible to scan this area effectively if you have full bladder.
- **Please note** that if you are having a period your pelvic scan will not be affected.

### **On the day of your examination**

- On arrival at the Imaging department you will be registered and will need to provide an authorisation code from your insurance company or another proof of payment.
- You may be given a gown to change into depending on which area of the body is being scanned.
- You may be asked to remove any jewellery in the area of the body to be scanned.

### **The examination**

- In the examination room you will be asked to lie on a bed.
- A friend or relative can stay with you during the scan. Alternatively we can provide a chaperone.
- The ultrasound will be carried out by a radiologist (specialist doctor).
- They will put a thin layer of clear gel on your skin over the area to be scanned and slide a small hand-held probe (like a large pen) over this area; this will transmit a picture onto a screen beside the bed.
- This is not painful, but it may be necessary to press a little harder at times to get a clearer picture.
- You can usually see the pictures on the monitor screen.
- The ultrasound scan can take about 20 minutes depending on which area is being scanned.

### **After the examination**

- The radiologist will usually talk to you about the results after your ultrasound.
- The radiologist will then make a formal written report. **The results** will be sent to the doctor who requested the test, normally within 2 working days.
- You can go home and resume all normal activities straight away.
- You can eat and drink as normal.

## **Risks**

**There are no known risks in having an ultrasound scan.**

## **Contact us**

If you have anymore questions or need further information please contact us on:

020 7483 5012 or

020 7586 5959 ext 6014/5157

Or contact the Superintendent, Tanille Spencer, on 020 7483 5066