

Ultrasound (General, Musculoskeletal & Vascular)



Patient Information

What is an ultrasound?

An Ultrasound examination is a widely used technique which provides detailed images of the body. Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves, which are bounced back from parts of the body, to create an image which can quite often be displayed on the screen of the ultrasound machine for the patient to view, and shows images in “real time” and as a moving image.

The sound energy used is absorbed by the body as heat, but there is no noticeable warming effect. There are no known harmful effects, and Ultrasound is commonly used in pregnancy. The Sonographer uses a hand-held device which produces and receives the sound waves which are then converted into an image.

For Pregnancy Ultrasound and Nuchal Translucency Ultrasound information please see the relevant Patient Information Sheet.

What preparation is required?

The preparation required will vary depending on the region being scanned. Some examinations require you to drink a significant amount of water prior to arriving for your appointment whilst others may require abstinence from food and liquid.

Abdomen

- Do not eat, drink or smoke for 6 hours before the appointment.

Renal

- Do not eat for 4 hours before the appointment. Empty bladder 1 hour before the appointment, then immediately drink 1 litre of water. A full bladder is required for this examine.

Renal Arterial Doppler

- Do not eat for 4 hours before the appointment. During this time you are require to drink 2 litres of water. You may empty your bladder when required. A full bladder is not necessary.

Pelvis

- Empty bladder 1 hour before the appointment, then immediately drink 1 litre of water. A full bladder is required for this examination.

What documentation is required?

Bring your referral and any relevant previous xrays for comparison.

Also bring your Medicare card, Pension or Healthcare Card or Veteran’s Affairs card details if applicable.

What you need to tell us prior to your appointment?

At the time of arranging your appointment, please advise us if you have diabetes and are on insulin, or suffer epilepsy, please discuss these conditions with our booking staff, as the timing of the examination may be affected.

What will happen during the examination?

You may be asked to change into a gown. A clear jelly will be applied to skin and a plastic probe is moved over the skin above the area being examined. Multiple images are taken throughout the examination. The operator (known as a Sonographer) will be with you throughout the scan, and may ask you questions in relation to your current medical issue. Obtaining the best images can be a challenge, and can demand notable time and effort on behalf of the Sonographer. With consent, an internal examination may be required for a female pelvic ultrasound.

How long will the examination take?

The time required for the ultrasound will vary greatly depending on the complexities of the situation. At a minimum some scans will take 15 minutes whilst some more involved scans may take up to an hour.

What can you expect after your examination?

There should be no ill effects after the examination. The gel is simply wiped from your skin. As it is water soluble it is easily washed from the skin and/or clothes.

Your appointment details

Date _____

Time _____

Location _____

Are there any risks?

Ultrasound scans utilise high-frequency sound waves (mechanical vibrations) when producing images. No ionizing radiation is used.

Ultrasound has been used in medicine since the 1950's and there have been no confirmed adverse effects attributed to diagnostic ultrasound exposure in this time. Benefits of the scan findings far outweigh any undiscovered risk.

Ultrasound should only be used for strictly medical purposes by suitably qualified health professionals.

What happens with the images and reports?

A report will be provided directly to your referring doctor.

We will store digital copies of all studies and reports on our secure patient information system for comparison with any future examinations.

