

Your Abdominal Ultrasound Scan

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This leaflet is designed to answer some of the questions you may have about your forthcoming ultrasound examination. Whilst we endeavour to scan every patient at their allocated time, some scans may take longer than expected which can unfortunately result in a delay. If, after reading this, you still have any worries or queries, please telephone the diagnostic imaging department appointments office on (01493) 452456 between 8:30am – 5pm Monday – Friday.

What is an abdominal ultrasound examination?

Ultrasound is a very safe and painless method of examining parts of the body using high frequency sound waves, which produce a picture on screen.

How do I prepare for my ultrasound examination?

You will be asked to starve for six hours before your appointment time. You must not eat or drink anything including chewing gum. You may take any tablets you require with water. Diabetic patients are asked to ring the department for their instructions.

Occasionally some patients are asked to attend for their scan with a comfortably full bladder. Your appointment letter will contain detailed instructions relevant to your ultrasound. If you are unsure of what to do please telephone the appointments office.

How is the examination performed?

When you check in at the X-ray department reception you will be directed to the Ultrasound waiting area.

Your scan may be carried out by either a sonographer or a consultant radiologist (a doctor who specialises in diagnostic imaging). A sheet of tissue paper will be placed over the top of your legs to protect your clothing from ultrasound gel.

Ultrasound gel will be applied to your skin and is easily wiped off at the end of your examination. This gel is water soluble and will not cause harm to your skin or clothing. The lights will be dimmed so the ultrasound screen can be seen more easily. The probe will be scanned across the skin of your abdomen/pelvis. The examination should be painless and may last between 20-30 minutes. You may be asked to turn on your side or to hold your breath for a few seconds to allow for better views.

It is expected that friends and relatives remain outside the examination room unless the patient is under 16 years old or has a severe physical or mental disability.



After the ultrasound examination

Once your scan is finished you will be able to eat and drink normally. A toilet is close by for you to empty your bladder prior to leaving.

How do I receive my results?

The radiologist / sonographer will need to concentrate carefully and it is unlikely that they will speak during the examination. It will not be possible to give you any results on the day of the scan or be able to tell you anything about any further treatment which may be required. This would be decided by your own doctor. You will be informed of how you will receive the results of your scan at the end of the appointment.

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This leaflet was produced by the Ultrasound Department as a service to patients.

Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/ department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

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The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact
PALS 01493 453240