

# Gynaecological Ultrasound Scan

## Gynaecological Ultrasound

Your doctor has identified some symptoms that require you to have an ultrasound examination. This examination takes two forms, transabdominal and transvaginal scans. Sometimes, both kinds are needed to help find out what's wrong or aid diagnosis.

## What is an Ultrasound Scan?

This is a simple examination, which uses sound waves to build up a picture of your body on a television screen.

## Are there any risks?

Ultrasound has been in regular use for many years and is considered safe. However, as a medical examination, it will only be performed with good medical reason and by staff with the appropriate qualifications and experience.

## What do I need to do?

In order to give a successful result you will need to attend with a full bladder. This means you need to drink one and a half pints of water one hour before your appointment. This is to allow time for the water to be absorbed and to fill your bladder.

## How long will it take?

The examination usually takes between 15-30 minutes to complete. This depends upon the type of scan needed.

Although every attempt is made to see patients on time delays can occur due to unforeseen events.

## Who will perform the ultrasound scan?

Your scan will be performed by either a radiologist (specialist x-ray doctor) or a sonographer (specialist health care professional).

## Can I still have the examination during my period?

Both examinations may be performed during your period (menstruation). It will not affect the outcome of the examination and all of our staff will be happy to scan you at this time. Some patients may not wish to have a transvaginal examination whilst menstruating. If this is the case then please discuss this with the Sonographer at the time of the examination. If you would prefer to attend at another time we can arrange this.

## During the scan.

You may be asked to change into a gown by a member of staff.

On entering the ultrasound room, the Radiologist/Sonographer performing the scan will introduce him or herself and ask you to lie on a couch.

A special gel will be placed onto your lower abdomen and a small transducer is then guided over the skin to obtain a picture. The examination is usually painless, however you may feel some pressure as the transducer is applied to get a better view.

## What is transvaginal ultrasound?

This is an internal examination (similar to an internal examination that your doctor may perform). It works in the same way as a pelvic scan through your skin. You will be asked to empty your bladder.

You will need to undress below the waist. A sheet will be provided to cover you during the examination. We will maintain your privacy and dignity at all times.

In line with the Royal College of Radiologists Recommendations, a Chaperone will be offered, along with the person performing the scan.

A very slim ultrasound transducer (covered with a condom for hygiene reasons) will be lubricated with gel and gently inserted into the lower part of your vagina (birth canal). Most patients find this painless.

If you have an allergy to latex, please inform the Sonographer/Radiologist prior to the examination.

## Why would I need a Transvaginal Ultrasound?

We may need to obtain a better view of your pelvic organs, or we may need to examine a part in greater detail. For example: to look at the actual lining of your uterus (womb).

## Concerns

If you have never had an internal examination or smear test in the past, please inform the Sonographer. We will be happy to deal with any concerns or queries that you may have.

If you have never been sexually active, then please inform the Sonographer performing the scan, as this would be an inappropriate examination for you.

## Can I bring a friend or relative with me?

You may bring a friend or relative if you wish. Please bear in mind that some examinations are of an intimate nature, and the Sonographer performing the scan may have to ask personal questions relating to your medical history.

## Chaperones

If you would like a chaperone during the examination please speak to a member of staff.

## Children

In an attempt to prevent the spread of infection, the trust requests that only necessary members of the public visit the hospital. For this reason we ask you not to bring children if at all possible. We appreciate that at times this may be difficult. Therefore, you may wish to bring another adult with you to supervise them in the waiting area whilst your examination is performed.

## Mobile phones/electronics

All phones, tablets and electronic devices must be turned off in the examination room.

## Personal choices

As a teaching hospital, we often have Radiographers and medical staff undergoing training. If a student needs to be present, or to perform your scan, we will ask your permission. You have the right to decline. This will not affect your care in any way.

## Finally

If you found reading your leaflet difficult and you do not understand what it means or if you have any questions or concerns please contact us on **01392 402336** and we can talk it through

## How to get to the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital at Wonford

**Please refer to the enclosed "Welcome to the Medical Imaging Department" leaflet or use the Trusts website for the latest information:**

**[www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/our-sites](http://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/our-sites)**

For more information on the Medical Imaging Department, please visit our website:

**[www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/services/medical-imaging-radiology-x-ray](http://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/services/medical-imaging-radiology-x-ray)**

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