

# Ultrasound

## Patient Information

### What is an Ultrasound?

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An ultrasound scan uses high frequency sound waves to produce an image onto a screen that shows internal body structures.

An ultrasound examination is performed by a sonographer (trained health professional) using a small hand held device called a transducer that is moved across the skin using sliding and rotating actions. The transducer emits sound waves at the internal body part being examined and the reflected sounds or echoes are recorded to create a high detail image.

Ultrasound is commonly used for procedures such as:

- Pregnancy scan – used to check and monitor foetal age, growth, development and position
- Abdominal scan – may be used to investigate abdominal pain, nausea or lumps. Structures that may be examined include the gallbladder, bile ducts, liver, pancreas, spleen and kidneys
- Pelvic scan – may be performed if a woman is experiencing pelvic pain or abnormal periods
- Musculoskeletal scan – used to help diagnose tendon tears, muscle tears or fluid collections.

Ultrasound is also commonly used to guide procedures such as Fine Needle Aspirations or Joint Injections.

### What happens during an Ultrasound?

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Preparation for an ultrasound will depend on the type of ultrasound requested. Our reception staff will confirm preparation details when you make your booking.

Before you have the examination, the sonographer will ask you questions about why you have come for an ultrasound. They will then explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have

before proceeding with the examination. You will be asked to sit or lie on the examination bed with the area to be examined exposed. A clear gel will be applied to the skin, which can be easily wiped off after the examination.

The sonographer will then place the transducer onto the area using gentle pressure. The transducer is moved across the area with a sliding and rotating action to allow the image to project onto the screen.

The sonographer takes still photographs from the moving images on the screen.

During the examination you may be asked to perform some simple movements to improve the quality of the imaging. If any movements cause you concern or discomfort you should let the sonographer know.

Ultrasound times vary depending on the area being examined, our reception staff will be able to give you an approximate time when you are booking the appointment.

A report will be sent to your Doctor within 24 hours

### What are the risks of an Ultrasound?

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Ultrasound is a safe examination which provides excellent imaging without any significant risk to the patient.

### Female Patients

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Pelvic scans, Obs or otherwise, may include an internal Transvaginal scan. This provides more detailed images.

If you would prefer a female Sonographer, please let our staff know at the time of booking.

Please see our Transvaginal Ultrasound patient information sheet for further information.

*Information is from Inside Radiology, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiology (RANZCR)*