

ULTRASOUND (US)

What is Ultrasound?

Ultrasound is a diagnostic imaging procedure that is commonly used to assess organs, soft tissues and blood flow. It may also be used to complement other forms of scans. High-frequency sound waves that cannot be heard by the human ear are used to create images of the inside of the body. The ultrasound is carried out by either a Sonographer or Radiologist, both are trained professionals in this type of scan.

Ultrasound is a quick and painless way of imaging most organs and soft tissue areas of the body.

How does Ultrasound work?

Ultrasound imaging is based on the principles of sonar (used by dolphins, submarines, and ships at sea). A small handheld ultrasound transducer, or probe, generates sound waves when placed in contact with the skin's surface. It also detects sound waves which are reflected back to the surface after interacting with tissue boundaries of internal organs. The returning echoes are transformed into images and displayed on the monitor in 'real time' while the scan is carried out. By moving the transducer around the body, organs can be viewed from different angles.

What is Ultrasound used for?

Most people are aware of ultrasound being used to view the uterus and foetus during pregnancy, but it can be used to image almost every part of the body including:

- › Internal organs such as: appendix, liver, pancreas, kidneys, bladder, thyroid gland, breasts, testes, ovaries, spleen, and even your eyes!
- › Musculoskeletal imaging and joint injections e.g. Shoulder
- › Blood flow imaging known as doppler scans.

How do I prepare for my Ultrasound scan?

Some preparation may be required for certain Ultrasound scans. For example, you might be required to fill your bladder before the examination by drinking water. For other examinations you might be required to fast. If any preparation is required this will be provided at the time of booking your appointment or specified in your appointment letter. Please let us know if you have any mobility challenges requiring additional equipment or other special needs or requirements when making your appointment so that we can ensure we are able to offer you the highest quality service.

What happens when I arrive?

On the day of your scan, you should arrive 15 minutes before your appointment time. You will check in at reception and you might be asked by the reception staff to complete a few forms. You will be asked to take a seat in the waiting area until collected by a member of staff. The examination will be explained to you, and you will be given the opportunity to ask any questions and give your consent. You may be asked to change into a gown for your scan.

What happens during the scan?

You will be taken into the scan room and will be asked to lie down on a couch. The room will be dimmed so that pictures on the screen can be seen more clearly. A cold gel is applied to the skin. This gel is used to achieve good contact with the skin. The transducer is moved back and forth to get the images required. You may be asked to take deep breaths and to hold them for a few moments. You may be also asked to change position to get a clearer

view of the body part or organ being scanned. Records of images will be made so that they can be viewed later. The scan takes approximately 15 - 20 minutes but may be longer for certain examinations. A chaperone will be present at all times of the examination. If you are scheduled to have a joint injection, the Radiologist performing your scan will also explain and discuss with you before commencing your procedure. You can decline this injection at any time. If you have received an injection, the doctor will give you appropriate aftercare information at the end of your appointment.

What happens after the scan?

When the scan is finished the gel will be wiped off and you will be allowed to dress and retrieve your items.



Are there any risks or side effects?

No. Ultrasound is a very safe procedure for all patients undergoing a diagnostic test. The Radiologist/Sonographer will scan for as long as is necessary to provide the required information within all technical limits. Apart from the probe on your skin, you will not feel any discomfort. There are no restrictions on normal activity, you can eat and drink normally, drive and return to work immediately after the scan.

When will I get my results?

After the scan the images will be reviewed by a Radiologist who will report on the findings of the scan. This report will be sent to the person who referred you for the test, they will then discuss the findings with you. Please note that we cannot discuss results directly with you, only the person who asked you to have the test can do this.

