

Patient information factsheet

Having a pelvis ultrasound scan

We have given you this factsheet because you have an appointment for a pelvis ultrasound scan. It explains what a pelvis ultrasound scan is, how to prepare for it and what will happen during the scan. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

What is an ultrasound scan?

An ultrasound scan is a test that uses high frequency soundwaves (that you can't hear) to create an image of the inside of your body. Ultrasound scans are very safe and do not use x-rays.

What is a pelvis ultrasound scan?

A pelvis ultrasound may involve a:

- transabdominal scan (where a small transducer is moved over your abdomen)
- (for women) transvaginal scan (where a small transducer is inserted into your vagina)

The scan will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes. We will do our best to make sure that you are seen on time, but emergencies may have to take priority on some occasions.

Preparation for the scan

When you come in for your appointment, wear loose-fitting clothing over the area being scanned.

Please note that children are not allowed in the scan rooms. If a child needs to come with you to your ultrasound, please organise for a responsible adult to supervise them in the waiting area.

Please read your appointment letter for more information about how to prepare for your scan.

During the scan

The procedure may be performed by a sonographer or a radiologist. A radiology department assistant will also be present. Because we are a teaching hospital, there may also be some supervised trainees at your appointment. We have both male and female staff working in the department. If you would like a chaperone for your examination, please let us know when you arrive for your appointment.

We will perform the scan in our ultrasound room. The room may be dimly lit so that we can see the images produced on the screen more clearly. We will ask you to lie down on a couch. We will then put ultrasound gel on your skin over your lower abdomen. This will help us to produce a better quality image. We will move an ultrasound transducer (a small probe) slowly over your skin. Occasionally, we may need to press quite firmly in the area where you may be having pain. Please let us know if you feel uncomfortable at any point during the scan.

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If you are a woman, we may then ask you if you are happy to proceed to the transvaginal scan (internal examination). If you are, we will ask you to go to the toilet to empty your bladder. Transvaginal scans can be carried out at any stage of your menstrual cycle, including during your period. If you are wearing a tampon or menstrual cup, you will need to remove it at this stage.

When you return to the scan room, we will ask you to undress from the waist down and lie on the couch again. We will give you a paper sheet or hospital gown to cover yourself with.

This scan is performed using a small ultrasound transducer (approximately the size of a tampon) that is covered with lubricating gel. Please note that we will not use a speculum (the tool used to open the vagina to see the cervix in a cervical screening, sometimes known as a smear test). We will insert the transducer into your vagina and then gently move this around to produce clear images of your pelvic organs. This is not a painful procedure, but occasionally some people may feel minor discomfort. If you experience any discomfort, please tell the sonographer or radiologist.

Please note that we will not ask you to have a transvaginal scan if you have never had an internal examination, such as a cervical screening (smear test), or if you have never had sexual intercourse.

After the scan

You will be able to return to your usual daily activities.

Results

We will review your images after the scan. We will then send a written report of the findings to the doctor who referred you for an ultrasound. Most reports will be ready 24 hours after your scan. However, for less urgent scans, the report will be with your referring doctor within seven days.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns before your appointment, please telephone the radiology department.

Radiology department

Telephone: **023 8120 6079** (8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday)

Useful links

www.nhs.uk/conditions/ultrasound-scan

www.uhs.nhs.uk/OurServices/Radiology-scansandimaging/Radiology.aspx

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**