

Pelvic Ultrasound

A pelvic ultrasound scan can be performed in two ways; Transabdominal and/or Transvaginal scan

What is a Transabdominal scan?

This scan is performed over the abdomen using the full bladder as a window. It provides a broad perspective of the pelvic organs.

Sometimes if the patient is unable to fill the bladder, or if further detail needs to be obtained, a Transvaginal scan may be performed.

What is a Transvaginal scan?

This scan is performed through the vagina using a slender electronic device called a transducer which provides more detailed images. It gives clearer information for almost all women, but is particularly useful in women who:

- Are being assessed as part of fertility treatment.
- Are unable to maintain a full bladder.
- Are post-menopausal.
- Have a retroverted (tilted back) uterus.

This procedure is routinely performed unless you feel it is not appropriate for you, or you have never had vaginal sexual intercourse or an internal examination

What are the main differences between Transabdominal and Transvaginal ultrasound scans?

Transvaginal ultrasound looks at a smaller area and creates a clearer picture because the transducer probe is closer to the organs due to being inserted into the vagina.

Transabdominal ultrasound provides a wider view picture of the pelvic organs.

To learn about each of these scans, please read on.

Transabdominal Pelvic ultrasound scans?

What is a transabdominal Pelvic ultrasound scan?

This is an ultrasound scan of the pelvis which looks at the uterus, ovaries and bladder in females. Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves which pass through the skin and are reflected off the organs to create a picture on a screen with the help of a computer. These pictures are then interpreted by the Radiologist/ Radiographer.

How do you prepare for this examination?

There is no need to fast before the exam. Take any medication you have been prescribed. In order to perform this ultrasound scan you must be "bursting to go and empty your bladder". To achieve this, you must drink at least one and a half litres of water or whatever is necessary to reach a limit of "bursting". It can take on average 40 minutes for the water to make its way down to your bladder after drinking the water. **Avoid emptying your bladder, as it is important that you attend with it full.**

What happens during the scan?

You will be taken into a slightly darkened examination room. You will be asked to lie on the examination table, your abdomen will be exposed and some warm gel is placed on it. A small transducer (electronic device), which produces the sound waves will then be moved over your skin to examine the ovaries and uterus. Sometimes a better image is achieved by applying some pressure. At the end of the scan, tissue is provided for you to wipe off the gel.

Sometimes a better image is achieved by using a small probe and inserting it in the vagina (a transvaginal scan). The Radiologist/Radiographer will let you know if this is needed in your case.

Is it safe?

Ultrasound has been around for the last 30 years and there are no known side effects. An ultrasound scan does not involve the use of x-rays. It is usually painless.

How long does it take?

Depending on how full you are, the examination generally takes about 20minutes

How will I learn the results?

The results will be sent to your referring doctor who will discuss the results with you.

Can I drive home?

Yes there are no known side-effects from this procedure.

Transvaginal Pelvic Ultrasound (TVS)

What is a Transvaginal pelvic ultrasound scan?

A Transvaginal pelvic ultrasound scan looks at the uterus and ovaries internally using a sterile (clean) electronic device called a transducer.

Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves which pass through the skin and are reflected by the internal organs to create a picture on a screen with the help of a computer which are then interpreted by the Radiologist/ Radiographer.

How do I prepare for this examination?

Please have a bath or shower before you come in for your scan. You will be asked to empty your bladder before going for your scan.

What happens during the scan?

You will be taken into a slightly darkened examination room. You will be asked to undress from the waist down and you will be covered with a sheet. You will be asked to lie on your back on a special bed with your knees bent. Most women find the examination less uncomfortable than having a smear performed. Once you are in a comfortable position, a sterile lubricated covered transducer will be gently inserted into your vagina. The transducer is a little bigger than the size of a finger or tampon. Only the tip of the transducer (about 2-3inches) is put in the vagina to look at the uterus and ovaries.

How long does it take?

The examination generally takes about 15 minutes.

Is it safe?

Ultrasound has been around for the last 30 years and there are no known side effects. It does not involve the use of x-rays and it is a simple, painless procedure. This procedure is routinely performed unless you feel it is not appropriate for you, or you have never had vaginal sexual intercourse or an internal examination. This procedure can be performed when you are having your period.

How will I learn the results?

The results will be sent to your doctor who will discuss the results with you.

Can I drive home?

Yes, there are no known side-effects from this procedure.

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