

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net.

What the service offers

We provide an ultrasound scan service for women during pregnancy that ranges from screening tests at approximately 12 and 20 weeks gestation, to diagnostic scans later in pregnancy.

What is an obstetric ultrasound?

Ultrasound uses sound to produce images of your baby. A special gel is applied to the skin to make contact between the ultrasound probe and your skin. The probe is moved over your tummy to produce an image on a screen.

Performing the scan requires a very high level of concentration and the sonographer will need to focus on the necessary checks that form part of the scan. For this reason we ask that you only bring one person into the scan room with you. We suggest that this is your partner or someone close who is fully aware of your obstetric history and would be able to support you in the event of bad news. Please note that children are not allowed in the scan room during the ultrasound.

Types of scan

Screening scans (15 – 30 minutes)

- **Dating/First trimester screening scan** (approximately 12 weeks gestation): Provide an estimated due date of delivery and check some fetal anatomy that can be seen at this stage. If accepted, perform a measurement of the fluid at the back of the baby's neck as part of the combined screening test, also known as Nuchal Translucency. This will also require a blood test.
- **Second trimester anomaly scan** (18+0 – 20+6 weeks) Check specific anatomy of the baby and fetal growth as part of the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme. Gender is not part of the screening programme, however, if parents wish to know and it is visualised during the scan, the sonographer may be able to tell you – please note that this can never be 100% accurate.

Black and white images are **only** available for these 2 scans at a cost of £5 for 2 images.

All obstetric scans are medical examinations, and therefore, you are not permitted to record the examination either as still images or a video.

Diagnostic scans (15 minutes) – Later in pregnancy your consultant or midwife may refer you for further scans to check that your baby is growing normally. This will measure fetal growth, amniotic fluid and check if there is positive blood flow from the placenta to your baby through the umbilical cord. These scans involve detailed measurements to confirm everything is in normal range for your stage in pregnancy.

Transvaginal scans – Where appropriate, in order to obtain more detailed images, the sonographer will ask for your permission to perform a vaginal ultrasound examination. This can measure the length of your cervix or, if you have a low lying placenta, ensure that the placenta is far enough away from the cervix for a natural birth. You will be asked to empty your bladder, and then an internal ultrasound probe is placed just inside your vagina to obtain images. A chaperone will be available if required.

Where this service is provided

Ultrasound scan rooms located in the Antenatal Clinic, Ladywell Unit , North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Facilities available

Drinking water

The hospital has one main car park situated as you come onto the site. You will need to collect a ticket on entrance to the car park and pay at the nearest machine before leaving.

Please note that there are no crèche or childcare facilities available at the Clinic.

How to be referred

Your community midwife will refer you for your dating/ first trimester screening scan.

Antenatal appointment staff will contact you with an appointment.

What will happen at first appointment

Please attend with a full bladder for the dating and anomaly scan. If further scans are needed, the sonographer will provide the preparation required for the scan.

A sonographer will call you from the waiting room, confirm your identity, clarify the scan you are expecting and obtain your verbal consent to perform the scan indicated by the referrer.

Further information

Antenatal Appointments Team, Ladywell Unit for all bookings information.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website www.careopinion.org.uk.

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