

Gynaecological Ultrasound Scan

Gynaecological Ultrasound

Your doctor has identified some symptoms that require you to have a gynaecological Ultrasound. There are two different ways of examining you; a transabdominal and/or a transvaginal scan. We usually start with the transabdominal scan but often need to proceed to the transvaginal scan to get more detail

What is an Ultrasound Scan?

Ultrasound is an examination using soundwaves. The Sonographer uses a small probe (transducer) against your skin which gives off the soundwaves. These bounce off different organs inside your body causing 'echoes' which the probe then picks up again and turns into a moving image on the ultrasound machine monitor.

Are there any risks?

Ultrasound has been in regular use for many years and is considered safe. However, as a medical examination, it will only be performed with good medical reason and by staff with the appropriate qualifications and experience.

What do I need to do?

To help the Sonographer get the best images it is really important that you attend with a full bladder. This means you will need to drink one and a half pints of water one hour before your appointment. This allows time for your bladder to fill properly.

How long will it take?

The examination usually takes up to 30 minutes to complete, but is sometimes shorter if the

Transvaginal scan is not required. Although every attempt is made to see patients on time, delays can occur due to unforeseen events.

Who will perform the ultrasound scan?

Your scan will be performed by a Sonographer (specialist healthcare professional), but sometimes by a Radiologist (specialist x-ray Doctor). They may be male or female, so if you have a preference as to who you would like to scan you please contact us when your appointment is arranged and we will organise this for you.

Can I still have the examination during my period?

Both examinations may be performed during your period (menstruation). It will not affect the outcome of the examination and all of our staff will be happy to scan you at this time. Some patients may not wish to have a transvaginal examination whilst menstruating. If this is the case then please discuss this with the Sonographer at the time of the examination. If you would prefer to attend at another time we can arrange this.

During the scan.

You may be asked to change into a gown by a member of staff.

On entering the ultrasound room, the Radiologist/ Sonographer performing the scan will introduce themselves and ask you to lie on a couch.

Special ultrasound gel will be placed onto your lower abdomen and a small hand-held probe is

guided over the skin to make the images. The examination is usually painless but the Sonographer may apply some pressure to get a better view.

What is transvaginal ultrasound?

'Transvaginal' ultrasound means 'through the vagina' (similar to an internal examination your Doctor might perform).

You will be asked to empty your bladder and you will need to undress below the waist. A gown will be provided to cover you during the examination to maintain your privacy and dignity at all times. You will be asked to lie on your back with your knees drawn up towards your chest. In line with the Royal College of Radiologists Recommendations, a Chaperone will be offered, along with the person performing the scan.

A slim ultrasound probe (covered with a condom) and lubricated with ultrasound gel will be gently passed into the vagina. Internal examinations may sometimes cause discomfort but it should not be painful. It is important you let the Sonographer know if you are finding it uncomfortable or painful so they can adjust what they are doing. If you have an allergy to latex, please inform the Sonographer/Radiologist prior to the examination.

Why would I need a Transvaginal Ultrasound?

We may need to obtain a better view of your pelvic organs, or we may need to examine a part of you in greater detail. This allows us to look more closely at the organs inside your body. It can give us much better detail helping us to find out the reasons for your symptoms.

Concerns

If you have never had an internal examination or smear test in the past, please inform the Sonographer. We will be happy to deal with any concerns or queries that you may have.

If you have never been sexually active, then please inform the Sonographer performing the scan, as a Transvaginal scan may not be an appropriate examination for you.

Chaperones

If you would like a chaperone during the examination please speak to a member of staff.

Mobile phones/electronics

All phones, tablets and electronic devices must be turned off in the examination room.

Personal choices

As a teaching hospital, we often have Radiographers and Medical Staff undergoing training. If a Student needs to be present, or to perform your scan, we will ask your permission. You have the right to decline. This will not affect your care in any way.

Finally

If you found reading your leaflet difficult and you do not understand what it means or if you have any questions or concerns please contact us on **01392 402336** and we can talk it through

How to get to the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital at Wonford

Please refer to the enclosed "Welcome to the Medical Imaging Department" leaflet or use the Trusts website for the latest information:

www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/our-sites

For more information on the Medical Imaging Department, please visit our website:

www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/services/medical-imaging-radiology-x-ray/medical-imaging-eastern-services

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