

Having an Ultrasound Scan

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 ndht.pals@nhs.net.

What is an Ultrasound Scan?

Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves to create an image of an area of the body. The scan is carried out by a sonographer or radiologist.

Why is it needed?

Abdomen Ultrasound Scan

An Abdominal ultrasound scan can help evaluate the cause of abdominal pain or bloating. It can identify gallstones, liver disease, and other conditions.

Pelvic Ultrasound Scan

A Pelvic ultrasound scan can help find the cause of unexplained abdominal pain, bloating, abnormal vaginal bleeding and other conditions.

Kidney, Ureter and Bladder Ultrasound scan

A Kidney, Ureter and Bladder (KUB) ultrasound scan can help determine changes in the size of the kidneys, signs of damage, the presence of stones or cysts, and other conditions.

What does it involve?

You will be asked to lie down on a couch and remove any clothing from the area that will be examined. Ultrasound gel is placed onto the area and a small probe is held over the gel. You should wear comfortable clothing for your scan. If you require a hoist, transport or a translator please contact the ultrasound department.

How long will it take?

The scan itself normally takes between 10 to 20 minutes. We try to ensure that appointment times are kept but sometimes emergencies need to take priority. If this is the case, we will inform you of any delays.

Where is it done?

The ultrasound department is located on the second floor of the hospital in the Radiology department.

What preparations are needed?

Abdominal Ultrasound Scan

- Please do not have anything to eat for FIVE hours before your appointment. You may drink fluids but do not drink anything containing milk or fats, and avoid fizzy drinks
- You should continue to take your medications as prescribed. You may take required tablets with a small amount of water.
- If you take tablets or have injections for diabetes please telephone the Diabetic Liaison Nurse for advice on 01271322726, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Abdominal and Pelvic Ultrasound Scan

- Please do not have anything to eat for FIVE hours before your appointment but drink plenty of fluids. Do not drink anything containing milk or fats, and avoid fizzy drinks.
- Please do not empty your bladder for TWO hours before your scan. An empty bladder may lead to misleading results.
- The separate 'Abdominal Ultrasound Scan' and 'Pelvic Ultrasound Scan' sections of this leaflet provide further information about these scans.

Pelvic Ultrasound Scan

- It is essential that you have a full bladder for this scan. Please do not empty your bladder for TWO hours before your appointment and make sure you drink TWO pints of non-fizzy liquid one hour prior to the scan. An empty bladder may lead to misleading results.
- For children we advise that they are encouraged to drink freely (non-fizzy drinks are recommended) and, if toilet trained, not to empty their bladder for two hours before the appointment.
- For adult ladies, in some cases it may be necessary to perform an additional internal (transvaginal) scan. This might be to assess the lining of the womb or problems involving the ovaries. You will be asked to empty your bladder and then a special probe is placed inside the vagina. A chaperone will be available if required.

Kidney, Ureter and Bladder Ultrasound scan

- It is essential that you have a full bladder for this scan. Please do not empty your bladder for TWO hours before your appointment. An empty bladder may lead to misleading results.

- For children we advise that they are encouraged to drink freely (non-fizzy drinks are recommended) and, if toilet trained, not to empty their bladder for two hours before the appointment.

What happens after the test?

Your scan will be reviewed usually on the same day and the results will be sent to your doctor who will discuss the report with you.

Are there any risks?

Ultrasound scans are normally pain free and are one of the safest ways we have of examining the body. It does not use X-rays or require injections of dye.

Follow up

Once your scan has been completed, please return to the surgical ward 'King George V' on the fourth floor.

Further information

For further information please contact X-ray/Scans Department on 01271 370217, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. To contact the surgical ward directly please call 01271 322720.

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 ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS 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.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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