



What is a Pelvic Ultrasound Scan?

This is an examination of the lower abdomen and pelvis using high frequency sound waves and is used to make detailed images of the body which are then read by the sonographer or doctor performing the examination.

What do I need to do before the test?

- Please carefully check your appointment date and time. The ultrasound service mainly offers appointments on weekdays but you may receive an appointment for an evening or weekend
- If you cannot keep your appointment or have any questions, please contact the booking team of the hospital where your scan is booked:

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Ultrasound Bookings:

- 0121 371 2362/64
- 0121 371 2254
- 0121 371 4286
- 0121 371 6550

Birmingham Heartlands Hospital Ultrasound Bookings:

- 0121 424 3264
- 0121 424 1009

Washwood Heath Ultrasound Bookings:

- 0121 424 3107

Solihull Hospital Ultrasound Bookings:

- 0121 424 5272/71

Good Hope Hospital Ultrasound Bookings:

- 0121 424 7374

- Follow the **preparation instructions** below

Preparation:

- You need to have a full bladder at the time of your examination. Please drink 1 pint of water or squash approximately 1 hour prior to your appointment time. **Do not** empty your bladder until after the scan.
- If you are worried about travelling with a full bladder, please attend 30 minutes before your appointment time and ask the receptionist for a drink to fill your bladder.

- Please contact us (on the numbers above) for further advice if you:
 - **have a catheter**
 - **have a pessary**
 - **need an interpreter (language or sign language)**
 - **have any other questions**

Where do I go for the scan?

Please follow the instructions on your appointment letter

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, but our waiting area is small, so please limit the number of people accompanying you. If you bring children less than 16 years old, you will also need to bring someone who can supervise them while you are having your scan, otherwise the scan will be re-booked.

What should I wear?

The examination will normally be done with you wearing your own clothes. Ultrasound gel will be applied to the area being scanned; therefore you may wish to wear a separate top and bottom or something loose. Paper will be used to protect your clothes from the gel but this cannot always be completely avoided. The gel should not harm your clothes. Alternatively, ask one of our assistants for a gown and you can use the changing facilities provided.

What happens when I arrive?

You will be greeted by staff and booked in at reception and then directed to the ultrasound waiting area.

Please allow up to 45 minutes in the hospital for your scan but occasionally this could be longer. The examination time for the scan varies but most will last about 20 to 30 minutes. We do our best to run on time but your scan may be delayed for emergencies.

We will require you to switch-off/silence any mobile devices during the scan itself.

If you arrive late for your appointment we may not be able to accommodate the scan and there is a possibility that the scan will be rebooked.

What happens during the scan?

Pelvic ultrasound scans can monitor changes in the uterus (womb) and the ovaries. There are two ways of performing a pelvic scan:

Transabdominal Ultrasound Scan (TAS)

For this type of scan you will be asked to drink water to fill your bladder. The ultrasound probe is placed on the skin in the lower part of your tummy. This type of scan may be enough to gain all the information required, however usually a transvaginal scan will be offered to gain more detailed information.

Transvaginal Ultrasound Scan (TVUS)

For this type of scan you will be asked to empty your bladder. You will be asked to remove your underwear for the examination and you will be covered by a sheet/ gown to maintain dignity and privacy. A special slim probe is gently placed into the vagina. The vaginal probe is cleaned before use, covered with a protective sheath, and lubricated with sterile jelly to make its insertion into the vagina easier and more comfortable. This procedure may be mildly uncomfortable and will feel very similar to having an internal examination (however a speculum is not required).

Giving my consent

We want to involve you in decisions about your care and treatment. The sonographer/radiologist will ask you if you are happy for the scan to go ahead. This is called verbal informed consent. If you do not wish to have the scan or are undecided, please tell the sonographer/radiologist. It is your decision and you can change your mind at any time.

Students/trainees may be present during the examination. Please alert a healthcare professional before the scan begins if you do not wish them to be present.

However, a trained chaperone will be present for the examination to support your wellbeing and assist the sonographer/radiologist.

Please remember that you can ask the sonographer/radiologist any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan. If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

Should I have a transvaginal scan?

The images obtained using transvaginal scans are often far superior to that of a transabdominal scan. For that reason if clinically indicated, this scan will be offered as part of your pelvic ultrasound examination (unless contraindicated), including to patients who have never been sexually active.

If for any reason you choose not to have the transvaginal scan, then it will not be performed.

We do not routinely perform the transvaginal scan on patients under 18 years of age (unless there is a particular exception/clinical requirement).

Are there any risks associated with this test?

There are no known harmful effects from ultrasound waves.

We use a clean, hypoallergenic gel so there is minimal risk of a skin reaction. If you have a latex allergy, please inform us prior to the examination so that we can ensure we use latex-free products.

There is minimal risk of cross infection. Equipment is cleaned thoroughly between each patient and the operator will use clean gloves and sterile gel for every patient. A single-use disposable sheath is used to cover the probe for each patient.

For patients who have never been sexually active or have recently undergone surgery, the transvaginal scan may be more uncomfortable.

There may be a slight increased risk of infection for some patients after having a transvaginal scan. If you develop a temperature/fever, new pelvic pain, abnormal bleeding or vaginal discharge after this examination then please contact your GP for advice. Inform your GP that you have recently had an Ultrasound Pelvis Scan.

What happens afterwards?

You will be able to leave straight after the scan. There is no reason you cannot drive home and resume normal activities.

The doctor or sonographer performing your scan may be able to give you some preliminary results at the time of the scan but this is not always possible.

If your GP has sent you for the scan then your results should be available from your GP in 7–10 days. However please check with the GP surgery that your results have arrived before attending that GP appointment.

If a hospital consultant has sent you for a scan then the results are usually available at your next clinic appointment. If you have not heard from your hospital consultant by three weeks after your scan, please contact the consultant's secretary via the hospital Switchboard:

Birmingham Heartlands / Hospital, Solihull Hospital / Good Hope Hospital Switchboard:
0121 424 2000.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Switchboard:
0121 627 2000

Accessibility

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