Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

# Ultrasound Scans in X-Ray

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## Patient Information

## Radiology Department

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# Introduction

If this information does not answer your questions, please contact the X-ray Department where your call can be directed to a Sonographer or Radiographer who will be pleased to help you:

**Department of Radiology at:**

**Royal Albert Edward Infirmary**

Wigan Lane

Wigan

WN1 2NN

Telephone **0300 707 2397**

**Leigh Infirmary**

The Avenue

Leigh

WN7 1 HS

Telephone **0300 707 8725**

**0300 707 8729**

**Thomas Linacre Centre**

Parsons Walk
Wigan

WN1 1RU

Telephone **0300 707 8560**

**Wrightington Hospital**

Hall Lane

Wrightington

WN6 9EP

Telephone **0300 707 8560**

Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00

## What is an ultrasound scan?

An ultrasound scan is a non-painful procedure, which uses high frequency sound waves. It is used to help diagnose disease and conditions. These scans are performed in the X-ray Department by a Sonographer who is a highly skilled health care professional who performs all types of ultrasound imaging, or by a Radiologist (specialist x-ray doctor).

## How does it work?

An ultrasound scan is a way of producing detailed pictures of the body using sound waves. The sound waves are at a pitch that is too high to be heard by the human ear. A computer converts the information into a moving picture which is displayed on a monitor. To perform your scan, it will be necessary to apply a small amount of gel to the skin surface in the area being examined.

This gel dissolves in water and will not stain your clothing. The procedure may be a little uncomfortable but should not be painful.

## Is it safe?

Ultrasound is considered to be a harmless method of investigating the body. There are no known side-effects from diagnostic ultrasound scanning.

## What are the benefits of having ultrasound?

This examination will help us make the correct diagnosis, so you will be able to be given the correct treatment.

## How long does it take?

Each examination is different and may take up to approximately 20 minutes to complete, depending on the area to be examined.

## Is there any special preparation before the examination?

Depending on what part of your body is being examined, you may be asked to follow some instructions before you come for your appointment. You may be asked not to eat or drink for six hours, or you may be asked to drink some water before your examination so that your bladder is full for the scan. Your appointment letter will detail any instructions.

Please read your appointment letter carefully and follow the instructions it gives. The success of the examination may well depend on this. Failure to follow the instructions may result in the examination being delayed or postponed to another day.

In most cases, you will not have to undress completely but will be asked to remove clothing from the area that will be examined during the scan. If necessary, a Sonographer or Radiography Assistant will show you where you can get changed in private.

## During the test

The lighting in the examination room is usually reduced. The scanning machine and screen, on which the images will appear, will be beside the bed. The machine makes a slight humming noise. You will be asked to lie on the ultrasound couch for the scan. Some scanning gel will be applied, and an ultrasound probe will be gently moved across the area to be examined. It may be necessary for you to lie in different positions, and you may be asked to hold your breath while pictures are taken.

Usually only one person performs the test. The person performing the scan will tell you what to do and will help you if you have any difficulties.

We sometimes have junior medical staff and trainees in our department. Trainees and junior staff may be present at the time of your examination. If you are uncomfortable with this arrangement, please inform the ultrasound staff at the time of your appointment. This will not affect your care or treatment in any way.

## What if I have other questions?

If you have any questions, doubts or worries, just ask. The ultrasound staff want to make you feel as relaxed as possible. This makes the scan easier for you and means that we get better pictures to aid your diagnosis.

## When will I get the results?

Sometimes the person performing the examination will be able to tell you the results, but in all cases a full report will be sent to the doctor who requested the test.

Normally you can expect to receive the results of your scan when you next see the doctor who sent you for the examination.

After your examination, the Radiologist or Sonographer who performed the scan will study the pictures taken during your examination. A report is then prepared, and this is sent to the doctor who asked for the examination. The report is normally sent out the day following the examination.

## What to do if you need ambulance transport

If you need an ambulance / transport, you should ask your General Practitioner (GP) Surgery to arrange it. You will need to give them at least three working days' notice. Please note that hospital transport is provided on medical need only.

**If you cannot attend your appointment, please contact the Ultrasound Department at the Hospital where you have been given an appointment, so that we can offer your appointment to somebody else.**

**We will be glad to offer you an alternative appointment and will try our best to accommodate you at a date and time suitable to you.**

**Please allow plenty of time to park your car.**



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