

## Ultrasound scan

This fact sheet tells you what an ultrasound scan is, and what is involved. Please read it before having your scan. If you have any questions, ask your doctor.

### What is ultrasound?

An ultrasound is a medical imaging procedure using high frequency sound to create pictures to look at soft tissue in your body.

Some clear gel is applied to the skin to allow the sound waves to travel through. A hand-held probe is placed over the area and the sound waves create a picture seen on a screen.

Ultrasound is generally a painless procedure. Unlike X-rays, it does not use radiation.

### Procedure

You will be given instructions on how to prepare for your scan. For example, you might need a full bladder, or you might need to fast.

The procedure time will vary depending on the type of exam and the area to be examined. Most exams will take around 30 minutes. Some pregnancy exams can take 45-60 minutes (see *Pregnancy ultrasound* fact sheet).

### After the procedure

A radiologist (a specialist doctor) looks at the images and sends the results to your treating doctor. You should not have any issues after your test.

### Risks involved

Ultrasound has been safely used in medical diagnosis for many years. Studies have not shown any negative effects.

### For more information

InsideRadiology by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists: [www.insideradiology.com.au](http://www.insideradiology.com.au)

RadiologyInfo by the American College of Radiology and Radiological Society of North America: [www.radiologyinfo.org](http://www.radiologyinfo.org)

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