



If you need this information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0800 374 208 email: patient.experience@salisbury.nhs.uk.

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

If you are unhappy with the advice you have been given by your GP, consultant, or another healthcare professional, you may ask for a second (or further) opinion.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Having an Ultrasound Examination (1 of 2)

Your doctor has asked us to arrange an ultrasound (scan) examination for you.

What is an ultrasound examination?

An ultrasound examination obtains a picture of the inside of the body without using x-rays. High frequency soundwaves are passed through the skin and when it reaches an internal organ the sound is reflected back. This echo is displayed and forms a picture which is interpreted by the operator.

There are many organs in the body which can be 'viewed' by ultrasound and these include the liver, gall bladder, kidneys, pancreas and pelvic organs. You may be asked to go without food and/or have a full bladder. Please check the letter which accompanies this leaflet for any necessary preparation.

Most pregnancies are now monitored by ultrasound and this enables the doctor to know the age, health and position of the baby.

There are some areas of the body which cannot be examined by ultrasound and these are areas where there is bone or gas (as in the bowel) and these can be better seen by other imaging modalities

How long does it take?

The examination usually takes up to 20 minutes, but this will vary from patient to patient, and depends on how well the images obtained during the scan show the details needed.

Will it hurt?

You should not experience any pain during the examination.

A 'gel' is applied to the skin A hand held transducer (probe) is moved over the area and pressure will be applied to obtain a picture. You will have no after effects from this examination.

What should I expect once I have reported to Clinical Radiology (X-ray)?

On arrival in the department you will be directed to use an automatic booking kiosk, just follow the instructions on the screen and you will be booked in and directed to the correct waiting area. If you are unable to use the automatic kiosk please report to the adjacent reception desk. A receptionist will book you in and ask you to take a seat in one of the ultrasound waiting areas. If any of the details on your appointment

Clinical Radiology
Tel: 01722 336262 ext. 4282

letter are incorrect please inform the receptionist at this time. A radiographer will take you from the waiting room to the examination room. We advise you to wear loose clothing. Although it is rarely necessary to get undressed for an ultrasound examination; there are certain examinations where you will need to change into a gown. During the examination patients are asked to part their clothes and tissue is put around the clothes to protect them. If the gel does get onto your clothing it can be washed off using a 40°C wash cycle. The ultrasound examination will be carried out either by a radiologist, or a radiographer skilled in ultrasound (sonographer). There may be a student present but your permission will be asked for them to be in attendance and for them to do your scan under supervision by a qualified member of staff.

Please follow the specific instructions on your appointment letter

During the examination

You will be asked to lie on a couch in such a way that the area under investigation will be accessible. Gel will be applied. The lights will be dimmed so that the ultrasound images on the monitor is easier to see. The doctor or radiographer may ask you to change your position during the scan and may ask you to hold your breath to obtain better views of the organs.

How do I get the result?

If you were referred by your GP a report will be sent to your surgery and you will need to see the GP for the result. We recommend that you allow five working days for electronic report transfer and sorting. If a consultant from an Outpatient clinic referred you the result will go to them and your consultant will arrange any follow up appointment.

Once the test is over you may eat and drink normally and if you require a toilet, you will be shown to the nearest one.

May I bring someone with me?

If you are attending for an ultrasound examination you may bring an adult family member or friend for moral support.

Are you diabetic?

If you are diabetic and you are asked to go without food, please ring the department for advice.

Further information

If you have any more questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

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We hope this leaflet has been of help to you. If you have any helpful comments, or criticisms, please let us know.