

Ultrasound scan for children



Radiology Department

This leaflet is designed to give you some information to help you prepare your child for their scan and to give you some idea of what to expect when they attend.

What is an ultrasound scan?

An ultrasound scan uses high frequency sound waves to create a picture of the inside of the body. The sound waves are transmitted through the body from an ultrasound probe and the pictures produced are displayed on a monitor.

What are the benefits?

It is a painless and simple way of assessing the organs inside your child's body in order to help investigate the cause of the symptoms they may be having.

Are there any risks?

Ultrasound is one of the safest ways of examining the body. It does not use x-rays and numerous scientific studies have provided reassuring evidence that ultrasound imaging is not harmful. (The British Medical Ultrasound Society, 2012).

What preparation is required before the ultrasound scan?

- Your child should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing for their scan.
- Your child should continue to take their tablets and /or medication prescribed by their doctor.

Kidneys & bladder and/or pelvis (uterus and ovaries):

We prefer your child to have a full bladder, but we know that this is not always possible.

- **Babies:** No preparation.
- **Age 2–4yrs:** your child should drink plenty of clear, non-fizzy liquid/ juice before the scan. Your child can eat as normal.
- **Age 4–16yrs:** your child should try to finish drinking at least one pint of clear, non-fizzy liquids/juice 1 hour before their appointment. Your child can eat as normal.

Try not to let them go to the toilet until after their scan. We understand however that this is not always possible. If your child needs to pass water before the examination please ask them to continue drinking in order for their bladder to become full again.

Abdomen:

We prefer your child to have a full bladder, but we know that this is not always possible.

- **Babies:** No preparation
- **Age 1–6yrs:** Your child should drink plenty of clear, non-fizzy liquid/ juice before the scan. Your child can eat as normal.
- **Age 6–12yrs:** Nothing to eat 2 hours before the appointment time. Your child should drink plenty of clear, non-fizzy liquid/juice before the scan.
- **Age 12 and upwards:** Nothing to eat 6 hours before the appointment time. Your child should drink plenty of clear, non-fizzy liquid/juice before the scan.

If your child has diabetes, they do not need to fast.

Scans of other parts of the body:

- No preparation required.
- Please feel free to bring along any toys which you think may make the visit more pleasant for your child.
- If you are unsure what preparation your child needs for the scan, please phone the radiology appointments office to discuss.

Who will do my child's scan?

A specialist doctor (radiologist) trained in ultrasound or a radiographer who has undergone specialist ultrasound training (sonographer) will undertake your child's scan. We sometimes have trainees in the department who are observing or learning under supervision. This will be indicated to you at the time of child's scan. If you feel that your child would rather be scanned by the regular staff alone, this option will be made available to you and will not affect the way your child's scan is undertaken.

What happens when I arrive in the department with my child?

Please report to the radiology reception desk where your child's personnel details will be checked to ensure our records are up to date.

What happens during the scan?

You are encouraged to stay with your child during their scan.

Our ultrasound rooms are dimly lit to reduce the amount of 'glare' on our ultrasound monitors.

Your child will be asked to lie on a couch and the area to be scanned uncovered. The radiologist or sonographer will sit or stand by the side of your child and a clear gel will be put onto your child's skin over the area to be scanned. This allows the probe to slide easily and helps to produce clearer pictures. The gel may be cold.

The radiologist or sonographer will slowly move the probe over your child's skin while viewing the images on the screen. Records of selected images will be made which can be viewed later.

Your child may be asked to hold their breath at times, or to change position. Occasionally, there may be a need to press quite firmly in the region being examined. This will be brief but is necessary in helping arrive at a diagnosis.

After the scan the gel can be wiped off and your child will be able to get dressed.

How long will it take?

The scan will usually take between 10-15 minutes. Whilst we will try to ensure your child is seen at their appointed time, sometimes emergencies may have to take priority. Please be patient, but feel free to ask the reception staff if you think that your child may have been overlooked. The total time in the department is likely to be 30-40 minutes.

Can my child eat and drink afterwards?

Yes. If your child has no further tests scheduled for the same day then they can eat and drink normally and should be able to resume their normal activities immediately.

When will I get my child's results?

The images will be reviewed after the scan and may need to be discussed with a senior colleague or consultant. The scan report will then be sent to your referring doctor.

If your GP sent your child for this examination you will need to make an appointment to see them in their surgery about 7-10 days after the examination.

If one of the hospital specialists sent your child for this examination and you do not have a further clinic appointment then they will send a letter

to you at home. If a clinic appointment has already been given to you, then the results will be discussed with you when your child comes to see the specialist.

For **‘one stop’ paediatric clinics** the report will be available immediately after the scan.

Where will my child have their scan done?

Ultrasound scans are undertaken in the Radiology Department at the Royal Surrey County Hospital or at Haslemere Hospital. The hospital your child is being scanned at and the time of your child’s scan will be written on the accompanying appointment letter.

Are there alternative scans I could have instead?

Your child’s doctor has requested for your child to have an ultrasound scan as they believe that this is the most suitable scan. It may be that you child has other scans or investigations booked as well. If you have any concerns over the type of scan your child is having please speak to us or your child’s referring doctor for more information.

Privacy and dignity

Sometimes tests, although necessary, can be embarrassing or undignified for patients but we promise to do everything we can to make your child as comfortable as possible during their visit to the department. We hope that the information in this leaflet will answer any questions you may have but please feel free to contact us if you have any particular worries, questions or concerns. We have both male and female staff in our department.

Questions and contact details

Following the examination, if you experience any problems please contact the radiology appointments office between 09:00 and 16:00. Outside these times please contact your GP.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about this procedure, please contact us before your appointment on **01483 464150** (a direct line).

If you are unable to keep your child's appointment notify the Radiology appointments office, giving as much time as possible. Wasted appointments cost the NHS money.

Royal Surrey County Hospital: 01483 464150

Haslemere Hospital: 01483 782311

Please be aware that if your child is more than 10 minutes late for the appointment we may not be able to scan your child and the appointment may have to be rebooked.

Please make sure that you are satisfied that you have received enough information about the procedure.

Reference source

British Medical Ultrasound Society (2012) Statement for the General Public on the Safety of Medical Ultrasound Imaging
www.bmus.org/policies-guides/pg-safety06.asp

Websites for further information

- www.rcr.ac.uk (Royal College of Radiologists)
www.rcr.ac.uk/content.aspx?PageID=323
- For general information about radiology departments visit The Royal College of Radiologists' website: www.goingfora.com

Contact details

For further information about Diagnostic Imaging Services at Royal Surrey County Hospital, please contact:

Royal Surrey County Hospital

Egerton Road
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7XX

www.royal-surrey.net

Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) NHS Foundation Trust fully subscribes to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) *Being Open* best practice framework, November 2010.

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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