

# Ultrasound scan

## What is an ultrasound scan?

This scan uses sound waves to build up a picture of the part of the body being scanned.

## Why do I need to have this scan?

An ultrasound scan can show changes in different organs inside the body. It helps doctors to know if a lump or abnormal area is cancer or not.

## What happens?

### Before the scan

The hospital sends you information about the scan so you know what to expect.

If you are having a scan of your tummy (abdomen), you might be asked to not eat anything for a few hours before the scan. This helps to get a clear picture.

If you are having a scan of your lower tummy (pelvis), they may ask you to drink lots of water before the scan it. Having a full bladder helps to get a clear picture.

### During the scan

An ultrasound is not painful. It can take between 10 and 30 minutes. You have the scan lying on a narrow bed. The person doing the scan puts some cold gel on the area being scanned. They then move a small device that produces sound waves over this area. The sound waves build up a picture, which shows up on a screen.

Doctors sometimes use an ultrasound scan when they are doing a biopsy (removing a small piece of tissue). The scan helps to guide them to the exact area.

### After the scan

It can take from a few days up to a week to get the results. Waiting for test results can be a worrying time. Talking to your family and friends about how you feel can help. You can also speak to your doctor or nurse if you have any problems, or if you need more support.