

## Patient information leaflet

### Pelvic ultrasound

Radiology department

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#### Introduction

We hope this guide will answer your questions about your ultrasound scan. Please contact the team if you require further information via the details at the end of this leaflet.

**If, for any reason, you are unable to attend or no longer require this appointment, please telephone the booking team on the number at the end of this letter.**

This will avoid undue delay and will help us to keep our waiting list as short as possible.

Please note that children are not allowed in the scan rooms and we are unable to offer supervision of children in the waiting room. If you are having difficulties coordinating childcare please contact the booking team.

**Staff are not permitted to supervise children so please ensure child care arrangements are in place to avoid your scan being rescheduled.**

Please let us know well before your appointment if you would like to request staff of a specific gender. We may not be able to meet your requirements on the day. Your appointment may have to be rescheduled to facilitate this.

#### What is an ultrasound scan?

Ultrasound examinations (scans) are tests which use high-pitched sound waves and specialist equipment to produce an image. They are particularly good at looking at some of the softer structures in our body without using ionizing radiation. The examination is harmless and should be painless. To perform the ultrasound scan we will put ultrasound gel on the skin and move a small probe over the area of interest.

In female patients a pelvic scan commonly assesses the area including womb and ovaries, in male patients it commonly assesses the bladder.

#### Why do I need an ultrasound?

The scan may help your doctor identify the cause of your symptoms or help them rule out conditions that could cause your symptoms. It may also be used to monitor certain conditions.

#### Preparing for your procedure

You will need to arrive for your appointment with a full bladder, please see instructions below.

If your bladder is not full the appointment may be delayed while you fill or may need to be rescheduled.

**If you use a urinary catheter please contact the appointments team in advance of your appointment.**

Please contact the booking team if you plan to use hospital transport, require a hoist transfer or think you may need extra support for this test.

#### Eating and drinking

Please ensure you drink 1 litre of water, or other non-carbonated fluid, 1 hour before your scan time. Please do not empty your bladder once you have started this preparation, although you may wish to empty beforehand.

You may eat as normal.

Version 2 | Paula Mattock | Ultrasound | Date ratified: May 2025 | Review date: May 2028



## Medication

Regular medication should be taken as usual.

## Getting to us

We have three hospital sites, **please check your letter to ensure you attend the correct location.**

Our addresses are;

The Princess Alexandra Hospital  
Hamstel Road, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1QX

St Margaret's Hospital  
The Plain, Epping, Essex, CM16 6TN

Herts and Essex Hospital  
Haymeads Lane, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 5JH

## When should I arrive?

Please arrive in the department 5 minutes before your appointment time.

Please report to the reception desk, your details will be checked and you will be asked to wait in the seating area.

Please be mindful that parking on site may be difficult and allow extra time.

## The day of the procedure

Please ensure you follow the correct preparation to fill your bladder.

Preferably wear loose-fitting clothing over the area being scanned.

## The procedure

The procedure may be performed by a sonographer or a radiologist, they will explain more about the exam being performed. A radiology department assistant may also be present. Because we are a teaching hospital, there may also be some supervised trainees at your appointment. The team will make every effort to ensure your comfort and dignity.

We have both male and female staff working in the department. If you would like a chaperone for your examination, please let us know when you arrive for your appointment.

We will perform the scan in our ultrasound room which may be dimly lit so that we can see the images produced on the screen more clearly. We will ask you to lie down on a couch and move your clothing away from the area of interest.

Ultrasound gel will be placed on your skin and we will move an ultrasound probe slowly over the area we are scanning. Occasionally, we may need to press quite firmly. Please let us know if you feel pain at any point during the scan.

The scan can take up to 20 minutes, but is often quicker. We will do our best to make sure that you are seen on time, but emergencies may have to take priority on some occasions.

In some cases, female patients may also be offered an extra type of scan called a transvaginal ultrasound. This involves placing a slim ultrasound probe into the vagina and is not normally painful. This would be discussed with you in more detail if required and would only be performed with your consent.

## After the procedure

The team will direct you to the nearest toilet so you may empty your bladder.

You may eat, drink, and return to your normal daily activities as soon as you wish.

## Can I drive after my procedure?

Yes, there are no side effects

### Can someone stay with me in hospital?

You may have an adult friend or family member attend with you, but they will usually stay in the waiting area while you have your examination.

If you think you may require extra support from a friend or family member during the scan please discuss this with the Radiologist / sonographer who will be performing the scan or with reception when checking in.

### How soon can I return to work?

You may return to work after your scan

### How soon will I get my results?

The results will be sent back to the doctor or healthcare professional who referred you for your scan, normally within a week.

At your next GP/outpatient appointment, you will be able to discuss the results.

Please note, your results will not normally be discussed with you on the day of the scan.

### Contacting the team

If you have any further questions, please **contact the ultrasound booking team on:**

**Telephone 01279 827179, select the option for appointments, then for ultrasound.**

Office hours **09:00-16:00 Mon-Fri** (excluding bank holidays)

There is no answerphone service for ultrasound bookings, patients who ring outside of the opening times are diverted to the Princess Alexandra Hospital Radiology reception desk until 8pm

If you have a weekend or evening appointment at either of the following hospitals and are delayed, please call the numbers below to speak with the appropriate radiology reception;

St Margaret's Hospital **01279 827038**

Herts and Essex Hospital **01279 827162**

### Your feedback matters

If you would like to give feedback on your care, please contact our patient experienceteam on [paht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:paht.pals@nhs.net) or 01279 827211.

Please contact the communications team on [paht.communications@nhs.net](mailto:paht.communications@nhs.net) if you would like this leaflet in another language or format.