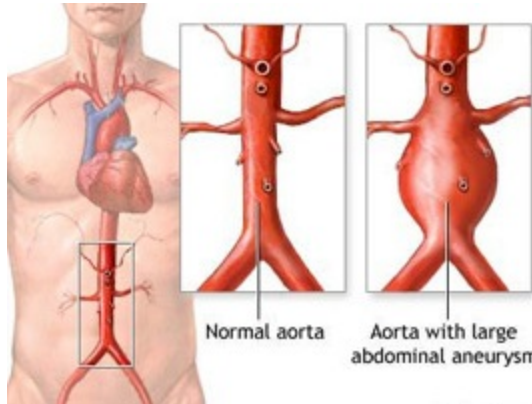


## ABDOMINAL AORTIC ULTRASOUND



### ***What is it?***

An abdominal aortic ultrasound uses sound waves to create images of the aorta. The aorta carries blood away from your heart and branches off to: the thoracic aorta and the abdominal aorta. While the thoracic aorta is located in your chest and can only be seen by CT or MRI, the abdominal aorta, located in the abdomen, can be seen on ultrasound.

These images can help evaluate the size of the aorta and to determine if it is enlarged. Enlarged aortas can lead to what is known as an abdominal aortic aneurysm, or a condition in which

the walls of the aneurysm are so weak that they eventually rupture and cause potentially life-threatening bleeding into the abdomen.

Common symptoms of AAA include:

- A pulsing mass in the middle of the abdomen
- A bruit heard using a stethoscope
- Pain
- Rectal bleeding
- Sudden loss of consciousness

### ***Who needs it?***

- Screening for aneurysms in patients with: diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure
- Patients in whom a pulsatile mass is felt on physical exam
- Patients in whom a bruit in the abdominal aorta is heard.
- Patients in whom there is a known abdominal aortic aneurysm – to monitor change in size

### ***What to expect before, during, and after?***

Before	Eat a healthy and filling meal the night before the exam. You will NOT be able to eat anything within 5 hours prior to the exam. This will allow your bowel gases to subside and to allow for clearer ultrasound results.
During	The abdominal aortic ultrasound is a painless and non-invasive test. Typically performed by a technician, you will be asked to lie on an exam table with your shirt pulled pull. He will maneuver the transducer over the skin of your abdomen and take pictures or images for your physician to see.
After	The doctor will provide you with results and recommendations for prevention and/or treatment right after completion of the test. Unless otherwise specified, you may resume normal activities and normal diet.

### ***Are there any risks I should be aware of?***

No risks are associated with this test. The sound waves are harmless and the gel is easily removed off your skin.