

Ultrasound in Pregnancy

An ultrasound is a test that uses sound waves to look at your baby, the uterus and the placenta. You will be able to hear your baby's heartbeat and pictures will be seen on the screen. An ultrasound is not an x-ray and does not cause pain. This test takes about 20 minutes and will be done in your doctor's office or clinic.

An ultrasound is used to:

- Check the baby's due date.
- Check the baby's growth and weight.
- See if there is more than one baby.
- Look for signs of birth defects. If it shows that there might be a birth defect, other tests will be done.
- Look for causes of bleeding or other problems.
- Check the baby's position late in pregnancy.

Although the baby's genital area may be seen, ultrasounds are not done to find the baby's sex. You will be asked if you want to know the sex of the baby if an ultrasound is done. Ultrasound does not always show the sex of a baby.

To Prepare

- You may be asked to drink 1 to 2 glasses of water before the test so your bladder is full. If so, do not urinate until after the test.

During the Test

- You will lie on a table with your stomach uncovered.
- Warm gel is put on your skin. A wand is moved across the gel to take pictures.
- You will be able to see the pictures on the screen.

- The staff will talk to you about the pictures.

Talk to the staff if you have any questions or concerns.

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