



(AFFIX PATIENT STICKER)

# Pelvic ultrasound

## Patient information

Please read this form, complete the back and bring into the scan room when called.

### What is pelvic ultrasound

An ultrasound examination is performed by a trained health professional (a sonographer or doctor) using a small, hand-held device called a transducer (or probe). The transducer transmits ultrasound waves that are relayed back to the ultrasound machine to produce images or pictures onto a viewing screen. It is a technique that uses sound waves to obtain pictures or images and there is no radiation involved. Pictures are taken during the examination.

A pelvic (transabdominal) ultrasound looks at your uterus, cervix, endometrium, fallopian tubes, ovaries, bladder and pelvic cavity. An abdominal ultrasound looks at the pelvic organs with a probe placed on the tummy wall. Transvaginal ultrasound differs from abdominal ultrasound as it looks at the pelvic organs from inside the vagina. Transvaginal ultrasound is an integral component of many pelvic ultrasound examinations.

### Why would my doctor refer me to have this procedure?

A pelvic ultrasound may be recommended by your doctor if you have symptoms that suggest a change in the appearance of your uterus or ovaries. This may include heavy menstrual bleeding, bleeding between periods, pelvic pain, irregular cycles and difficulty falling pregnant. Pelvic scans are also used to assess early pregnancy, particularly when there is abnormal pain or bleeding, and occasionally in later pregnancy.

### How do I prepare for my pelvic ultrasound?

When a pelvic ultrasound is requested, a full bladder is necessary to provide a clear window to see the uterus. A full bladder is not required for transvaginal ultrasounds, and you will be asked to empty your bladder before moving onto that part of the examination.

If you are wearing a tampon, it will need to be removed before the transvaginal examination. If you are having a period, this is not a problem. The blood will not affect the pictures being taken.

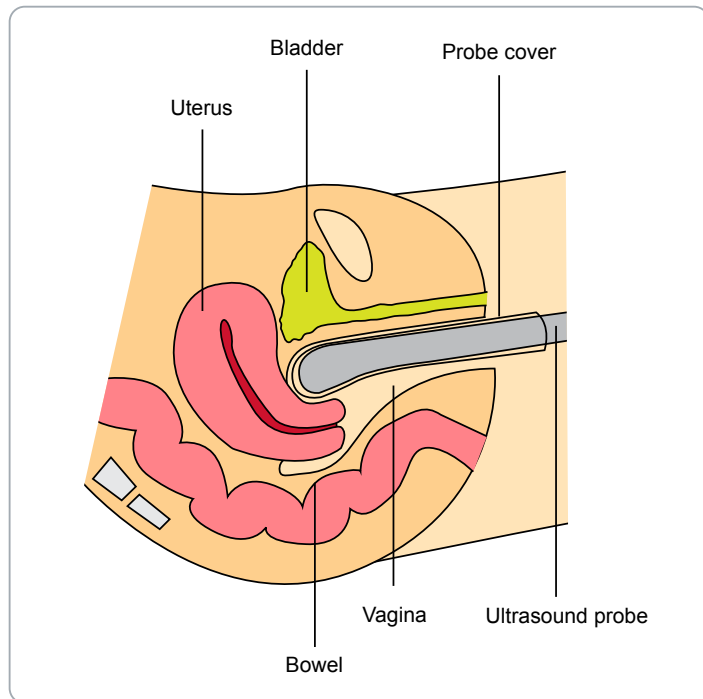
You will be asked for your consent prior to having the test.



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## What happens during my transvaginal pelvic ultrasound

After emptying your bladder, you will be asked to wear a gown and undress from the waist down, or you may be provided with a sheet to cover your lower half instead of a gown. You will then be asked to lie on an examination couch. You will be asked to open your legs and the transducer is inserted into the vagina. If you prefer to insert the transducer yourself, you can.



The transducer is slightly larger than a tampon, and especially shaped to fit comfortably into the vagina. A protective cover is placed over the transducer and lubricating gel is applied to it for easier insertion.

Once the transducer is in position, the sonographer moves it to image the pelvic organs. The transvaginal ultrasound is recognised as being safe, with minimal discomfort for the patient. Another member of staff will be present during the transvaginal ultrasound, to ensure that you are comfortable with what is happening and assist the sonographer during the ultrasound examination.

## How long does a pelvic ultrasound take?

The entire examination usually takes 20-30 minutes, with the transvaginal ultrasound being about 10-15 minutes of this time.

## What are the benefits of a transvaginal ultrasound?

The insertion of the transducer into the vagina allows a clear view of the pelvic organs and very clear ultrasound images to be taken of the area. This will help to guide the discussion between you and your doctor about any further investigation or treatment that may be needed. Also, many women find that a vaginal ultrasound with an empty bladder causes less discomfort than an abdominal ultrasound with a very full bladder.

## Are there any risks of a transvaginal ultrasound?

There is a possible small risk of infection from a transvaginal ultrasound. This risk is minimised with probe disinfection protocols, which are strictly followed in the Ultrasound Department. After every examination, the probe must pass a disinfection process that complies with Australian standards.

## When can I expect the results of my pelvic ultrasound?

The time it takes for your doctor to receive a report will vary, though most reports are completed within a week.

Please feel free to ask at the time of your scan when the written report will be provided to your doctor.

It is important that you discuss the results with your doctor, either in person or on the phone, so that they can explain what the results mean for you. Unfortunately, not all abnormalities are evident on ultrasound, and further testing may be required.

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## More information

Further information on specific examinations can be found at [insideradiology.com.au](https://insideradiology.com.au)

For more information about ultrasounds at the KEMH Ultrasound Department, call (08) 6458 2830.

If you want to ask more questions before agreeing to a transvaginal ultrasound, bring this form in to the scan room without signing it, and give it to the sonographer doing your scan.

If you understand and have no further questions, please tell us your decision below by ticking the relevant boxes, and write your name, date and signature.

- ☐ I consent to having a transvaginal ultrasound examination today.
- ☐ I do not consent to having a transvaginal ultrasound examination today.
- ☐ I am allergic to latex or rubber.
- ☐ I am not allergic to Latex or rubber.
- ☐ I don't know if I am allergic to latex or rubber.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**(Medical Imaging staff:** Scan the completed form into the IntelePACS record and return to the patient to keep. If this form is unsigned, the bearer has more questions before agreeing to a transvaginal ultrasound.)



CONSUMER  
REVIEWED

The information provided is for information purposes only. If you are a patient using this publication, you should seek assistance from a healthcare professional when interpreting these materials and applying them to your individual circumstances.



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🌐 [www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au](https://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au)

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