



Ultrasound patient information

Pelvic ultrasound

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 which are relayed back to the ultrasound machine to produce images or pictures onto an ultrasound screen. It is a technique which uses sound waves to obtain pictures or images and there is no radiation involved. Pictures are taken during the examination.

Why would my doctor refer me to have this procedure?

A pelvic ultrasound looks at your uterus, cervix, endometrium, fallopian tubes, ovaries, bladder and pelvic cavity. Transvaginal ultrasound differs from an abdominal ultrasound as it looks at the pelvic organs from inside the vagina. Transvaginal ultrasound is considered to be an integral component of a pelvic ultrasound examination.

How do I prepare for my pelvic ultrasound?

When a pelvic (transabdominal) ultrasound examination is requested, a full bladder is necessary to provide a clear window to see the uterus. You will be asked to empty your bladder, prior to the transvaginal ultrasound examination.

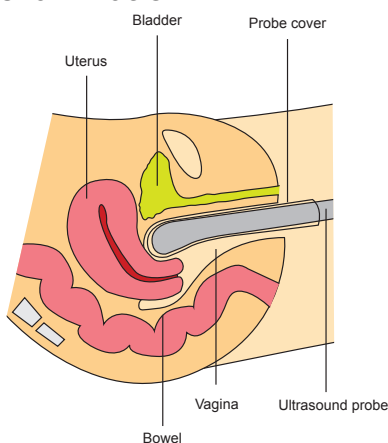
If you are wearing a tampon, it will need to be removed. If you are having a period this is not a problem and in some instances it is an advantage when assessing a variety of gynaecological problems.

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

What happens during my pelvic ultrasound?

After emptying your bladder you will be asked to wear a gown and undress from the waist down. You will then be asked to lie on an examination couch. A sheet is provided to cover you. You will be asked to bend your legs and the transducer is inserted into the vagina. 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 ease of insertion.

Please let the sonographer know if you have any allergies to latex or rubber before the examination.



Once the transducer is in position, the sonographer moves it to image the pelvic organs. The transvaginal ultrasound examination is recognised as being safe, with minimal discomfort.

Another member of staff will be present during the transvaginal ultrasound to chaperone and assist the sonographer during the ultrasound examination.

How long does a pelvic ultrasound take?

The entire examination usually takes approximately 30 minutes, with the transvaginal ultrasound between 10-15 minutes.

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.

Are there any risks of a transvaginal ultrasound?

There is a possible small risk of infection from a transvaginal ultrasound examination. This risk is minimised with probe disinfection protocols, which are strictly followed in the ultrasound department and after every examination the probe must pass this strict disinfection process. This disinfection policy complies with Australian Standards.

When can I expect the results of my pelvic ultrasound?

The time it takes for your doctor to receive a written report will vary.

Please feel free to ask 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 telephone, so that they can explain what the results mean for you.

Should you require further information regarding transvaginal ultrasound please ask the sonographer.

Unfortunately not all abnormalities are evident on ultrasound and further testing may still be required.

Further information on specific examinations can be found at insideradiology.com.au.

For further information about ultrasounds at KEMH

Ultrasound Department - (08) 6458 2830



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

Women and Newborn Health Service

King Edward Memorial Hospital
374 Bagot Road, Subiaco WA 6008
Telephone: (08) 6458 2222
www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au

© North Metropolitan Health Service - Aug 2018

Disclaimer: The advice and information contained herein is provided in good faith as a public service. However the accuracy of any statements made is not guaranteed and it is the responsibility of readers to make their own enquiries as to the accuracy, currency and appropriateness of any information or advice provided. Liability for any act or omission occurring in reliance on this document or for any loss, damage or injury occurring as a consequence of such act or omission is expressly disclaimed.