



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Preparing for your pregnancy ultrasound scans

Maternity

Information
for pregnant
women and people

What is this information about?

This information is about your pregnancy ultrasound scans. It explains:

- Why you are having your scans.
- What you need to know before your scans.
- Where you can find information about the type of scan you are having.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because you are having pregnancy scans. This information will help make sure that you are prepared for your scans and that we get the best information possible about you and your baby. This will help us care for you during your pregnancy, delivery (when your baby is born) and postnatally (after your baby is born).

Why am I having ultrasound scans during my pregnancy?

An ultrasound scan is a way for us to check the health of you and your baby. Scans can be used to help plan your pregnancy, delivery and postnatal care.

How can I prepare for my ultrasound scan?

Please do:

- ✓ Make sure you arrive on time for your appointment. If you are not sure what time your appointment is, please call the ultrasound booking office, they will be able to check for you. If you arrive late for your scan, your scan may be cancelled and rebooked for another day.

- ✓ Read the information about the type of scan you will be having. This will come with your appointment letter. If it does not, please let us know before your scan.

Where should I go for my scan?

Please check the details in your appointment letter. If you have not got a letter, then call our booking team and they will be able to confirm where you should go for your scan.

Can I have someone else with me during the scan?

Yes. One adult will be able to come with you for the scan.

Can I bring children to my scan?

No, you cannot bring children with you to any of your scans. This is because:

- All scans are medical appointments.
- Having children in the scan room is a distraction for sonographers.
- Sometimes we see unexpected things on the scan. It can be more difficult to tell you about these if you are with a child. It could also be very upsetting for you and your child.
- We do not have anyone who can look after children during your scan. If you do not have someone to look after your child, we will have to rebook your scan.

Do I need a full bladder for my scan?

- **If you are earlier than 16 weeks pregnant:**
 - Yes. Come to your scan with a comfortably full bladder (you feel like you need a pee, but not straight away).
 - A full bladder is like a window for us to see your baby and will help us get the clearest pictures that we can.

- Please drink plenty before your scan. Try to drink two pints (one litre) in the two hours before your scan.
- Try not pee in the hour before your scan.
- **If you are over 16 weeks pregnant:**
 - No. You do not need a full bladder for your scans.
 - Please have a pee before your scan time, if this will make you more comfortable.

Who will be at my scan?

There will be a sonographer scanning you. There may be an imaging support worker. They are here to help the sonographer and care for you. There are people training in the scanning department. If you agree, they may do part, or all of your scan. A qualified sonographer will supervise them as they do your scan. Tell us if you would prefer not to have a trainee at your scan.

How will my scan be done?

- We will ask you to lie down on a bed and uncover your tummy
- Your sonographer will put ultrasound gel on your tummy. This helps the hand-held scanning device (ultrasound probe) move smoothly over your tummy and makes sure there is contact between your tummy and the probe. This is needed for us to get clear scan pictures.
 - Before we scan you, we will give you some paper. You can tuck this into your clothes which should stop the ultrasound gel from going on them.
 - We try to warm up the gel for you, so it does not feel cold on your skin.
- The sonographer uses the ultrasound probe to scan over your tummy, to look at you and your baby.

- Ultrasound probes use soundwaves to make pictures. You cannot hear these sound waves, but when they bounce off different parts of the body, they create 'echoes'. These echoes are picked up by the probe and turned into a moving image.

How long will the scan take?

How long a scan takes is different for everybody. Your appointment will usually be booked for 20 to 30 minutes. We may ask you to walk around or shake your hips if your baby is in a difficult position. This can mean scans take longer than your appointment time. Please be aware of this when you plan your appointment day.

Sometimes we have to rebook you for another appointment if for some reason we cannot finish your scan.

Will I get photos of my baby at my scan?

We will try to take some photos of your baby for you to take home. How clear your pictures are can depend on:

- The position of your baby.
- Where your placenta is.
- Your body mass index (BMI).
- How many weeks pregnant you are.
- Whether you have wind in your tummy (bowel gas).
Most people do have this.

How much do my scan photos cost?

We do not charge for scan photos but we would be grateful if you could make a donation. Donation pots are found in the scanning department. In hospitals that do charge for photos, the cost can be £5.00 for a picture.

Can I take my own photos in the scanning room?

No. This is because:

- A scan is a private medical examination
- The scan room contains confidential information about you and other people
- We will give you scan photos, if we can get them.

What should I wear for my scan?

Please wear loose fitting clothes, which can easily be moved out of the way of your tummy. This is so we can see your baby clearly and do not get scan gel on your clothes. If you do get gel on your clothes, it will usually dry and wash out easily.

Who can I contact if I need more information or support after I have read this information?

St. Richards Hospital phone:

Antenatal Ultrasound Booking

01243 831434 Ext. 33127

Antenatal Clinic (ANC)

01243 831434 Ext. 32871

Day Assessment Unit (DAU)

01243 831434 Ext. 32806

Delivery Suite

01243 831434 Ext. 32961

Worthing Hospital phone:

Antenatal Ultrasound Booking

01903 285148 Ext. 84076

Antenatal Clinic (ANC)

01903 285148 Ext. 84371

Day Assessment Unit (DAU)

01903 285148 Ext. 85146

Delivery Suite

01903 285148 Ext. 8460 or 85262

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in Chichester and Worthing.

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