

The 18 – 20 Week Ultrasound Examination



NEWCASTLE ULTRASOUND *for* WOMEN



The 18-20 week Ultrasound Examination

Ultrasound is the use of high frequency sound waves to create an image. Ultrasound is often considered part of the routine obstetric care for all pregnant women.



What is the purpose of this examination?

To assess:

- Number of babies in the uterus
- Age of pregnancy
- Baby's physical development
- Position of placenta
- Volume of fluid around the baby

Why 18 to 20 weeks?

Good detail can usually be obtained, allowing a more complete assessment of the baby's structure.

Do I need a full bladder?

It is useful to have some fluid in the bladder to allow for better visualization of the fetus by keeping the uterus above the pelvic bones. This can be achieved without the bladder being so full as to be uncomfortable.

Can I bring a video?

Yes. A video (VHS) of the examination can be recorded. You can bring one, or we are happy to provide a 10 minute tape for \$11, the proceeds of which go to charity, usually Austcare. Alternatively, we can supply still images on a floppy disk or email them to a patient.

Can everything be seen at one examination?

Usually it can, but sometimes the age of the fetus, the position or the build of the mother may mean that a repeat examination is necessary.



Can I find out the sex of my baby?

Often the sex of the fetus can be seen. Sometimes it can not be seen due to the position of the fetus. Some parents are keen to discover the sex of their baby and others are not. If you wish to find out the sex of the baby please let the person performing the ultrasound know.



Can every defect of the fetus be seen?

No, a normal ultrasound examination cannot guarantee a normal fetus. Unfortunately there are still a few problems, which cannot be seen. We cannot see chromosome abnormalities, but may see changes indicating a higher likelihood of chromosome abnormality.

Is it safe?

Diagnostic ultrasound has been in use since the late 1950's. To date the results of numerous follow-up studies on patients and children who had been examined before birth have failed to demonstrate any biological effect that could be attributed to the ultrasonic examination.

4D Ultrasound

Our state of the art ultrasound 4D system marks a new dimension in women's reproductive imaging in Newcastle. This system is uniquely available through NUFW. 4D ultrasound represents the difference between video and a still photograph. Through this revolutionary technology, your baby's three-dimensional image is continuously updated, providing a "live action" view.

Our ultrasound systems are based on an entirely digital platform, with very fast computer processors to cope with the large volume of data required to reconstruct a 4D images again and again, giving the impression of a moving image. Often 4D ultrasound provides best images at about 26 weeks of pregnancy. Please let our staff know should you wish to have a 4D examination.



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