



## Before Your Appointment: What You Should Know About Your Prenatal Ultrasound

An ultrasound exam has been ordered to aid in the care of your pregnancy. Ultrasound is a valuable medical tool in helping to care for you and your baby, and may be ordered by your prenatal care provider for a number of different reasons such as determining the age of your pregnancy, estimating your baby's risk for certain chromosomal problems, or evaluating the development and growth of the baby. However, the science is not exact and our ultrasound findings during the pregnancy may not exactly match the findings at birth. Some conditions simply cannot be identified by ultrasound at all, while other types of birth defects can only be seen some of the time. Medically appropriate use of ultrasound in pregnancy is considered safe, and no harmful effects of ultrasound for you or your baby have been identified after nearly 50 years of use.

Here are a few things we would like you to keep in mind:

- **You will need a full bladder for your ultrasound exam.** As a guideline, finish drinking 16 ounces of liquid 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment. The sonographer will determine whether you may empty your bladder.
- **The duration of your ultrasound appointment will be scheduled based upon the type of study initially ordered.** Your exam may take more or less time, depending on a number of factors. This may mean that you may have to wait to see your provider if your ultrasound is finished early and you have an appointment scheduled afterwards.
- **We do not allow videotaping or photography during ultrasound exams.** This is in accordance with clinical guidelines established by the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine. Please share this with any friends and family who may accompany you to your ultrasound exam(s).
- **The sex of your baby may be examined as part of your ultrasound exam.** Please notify your sonographer at the beginning of the study if you do not wish the baby's sex to be revealed. The sex will also be present on the report sent to your prenatal care provider and is likely to appear in your electronic health record. To avoid accidentally revealing this portion of the ultrasound exam, it is suggested that you do not look at this report.

While ultrasound is a medical tool and we are committed to the highest standards of quality, we also understand that your ultrasound is an important time for you to begin bonding with your baby. During the exam, we would be happy to capture several pictures for you to share with friends and family. In addition, a flash drive containing pictures of your ultrasound exam is available for purchase upon request.

Ultrasound costs may be covered by insurance; however, the charges may be applied to your deductible by your insurance company which means you may be responsible for some or all of the costs. It is recommended that you check with your insurance company to determine your coverage prior to the ultrasound exam and consider speaking with one of the financial counselors in our office for a good-faith estimate of the portion of the cost you may be responsible for if you are unsure or have questions.

*Thank you for your attention to these guidelines.*

*Insurance coverage for ultrasound varies; check your benefits and talk with your provider if you have any concerns.*