



Prevention & Medical Care  
To Help You Live Better, Longer.

## Preparing for Your Ultrasound

This is a guide to help you prepare for your ultrasound visit. Ultrasound is a non-invasive procedure, which uses transmitted and reflected sound waves to create an image in film. We can see the size, shape, and texture of many organs with ultrasound. Sometimes other imaging tests (CT scan, Nuclear Medicine, MRI, etc.) will be ordered if the ultrasound cannot fully answer your practitioner's questions. Often an ultrasound is the first and only test that is needed. It is a safe test for everyone, including pregnant women and children, because there is no radiation involved. Some U/S scans require a certain amount of preparation on your part, others do not. **Please make sure you have read and understand the proper instructions for your type of test.**

### Before Your Appointment

If you have had an ultrasound examination at other hospitals or clinics, please arrange to have them sent to us before your appointment. Other previous films and reports may be necessary (X-rays, CT scans, etc.) and your practitioner will let you know if you need to make arrangements for these to be sent to us. This is very important because comparing test results helps detect problems.

### What to Expect During Your Exam

A warm lotion will be placed on the skin, and a small device held by the sonographer will be placed on the area to be examined. The sonographer will scan the area and take several pictures of each organ. She may ask you to hold your breath or turn in order to get the best images possible. Some measurements are required by the doctor to get an accurate assessment of the organ, or in the case of pregnant women, the baby.

Most gynecological (pelvic) exams and some early obstetric (pregnancy) exams require an internal exam with a specially designed transducer that fits into the vagina. The patient will be able to empty her bladder before this portion of the exam.

A scan can take 20-45 minutes, depending on the type of exam. Occasionally the radiologist or gynecologist will want to come in and scan after viewing the ultrasound technologist's initial views. Don't be alarmed. Often the doctor needs to "get a feel" of where something is in relation to other organs or vessels in order to read the films.

### Your Scheduled Appointment:

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Amherst Medical Center  
31 Hall Drive  
Amherst, MA 01002  
(413) 256-8561

Easthampton Health Center  
238 Northampton Street  
Easthampton, MA 01027  
(413) 774-6301

Greenfield Health Center  
329 Conway Street  
Greenfield, MA 01301  
(413) 586-8400

Northampton Health Center  
70 Main Street MA 01027  
Florence, MA 01062  
(413) 586-8400

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**Please note that examinations may need to be rescheduled if instructions are not followed.**

***Ultrasound Abdominal Ultrasound or Ultrasound, Abdominal Aorta***

***Ultrasound, Liver***

(Includes liver, gall bladder, kidneys, spleen, pancreas, aorta and CBD)

You should not eat or drink anything except water 6 hours prior to your exam. Any necessary medications may be taken the morning of the exam **WITH WATER ONLY**. You may drink water if you are thirsty. It will not affect the exam.

***Ultrasound, Abdominal (Pediatric Patient)***

(Includes liver, gall bladder, kidneys, spleen, pancreas, aorta and CBD)

Children under 12 years should not eat or drink anything except water for at least four hours before the exam.

***Ultrasound Pelvic Transabdominal and Transvaginal***

***Ultrasound Pelvic, Transabdominal***

***Ultrasound Pelvic, Transvaginal***

(Includes uterus, ovaries, pelvis and / or fetus)

1. Please do not fast; the bladder fills more quickly if you are not hungry.
2. Empty your bladder 1 ½ hours prior to your scheduled examination time.
3. Immediately drink four 8 oz glasses (one complete quart of liquid (water, coffee, tea, and / or soda are okay) within 10-15 minutes of emptying your bladder.
4. You must have a full bladder at the time of the examination, so please do not empty your bladder after you have started to drink. You will have to hold your bladder for only 5-10 minutes once you are called in for your exam.

***Ultrasound, Kidney or Bladder scan***

(Includes bladder and kidneys)

1. Empty your bladder 1 ½ hours prior to your scheduled examination time.
2. Immediately drink four 8 oz glasses (one complete quart) of liquid (water, coffee, tea, and / or soda are okay) within 5-10 minutes of emptying your bladder.
3. You must have a full bladder at the time of the examination, so please do not empty your bladder after you have started to drink. You will have to hold your bladder for only 5-10 minutes once you are called in for your exam.

***Ultrasound Kidney (Pediatric Patient)***

(This applies only if the patient is toilet-trained.)

Please practice this at home in order to determine how much liquid it will take to make your child feel full.

1. Have your child empty his/her bladder 1 hour before the exam.
2. Immediately have your child drink (2) to (3) 8 oz glasses of liquid (water, milk, or juice) within 15 minutes.

Do not let your child empty his/her bladder until the exam is over.

This usually takes only 5-10 minutes.

***Ultrasound, Abdominal and Ultrasound, Pelvic Abdominal and Transvaginal***

1. You must fast for at least 6 hours before this exam, but your bladder must be filled.
2. 1 ½ hours before your exam, empty your bladder. Immediately drink (5) 8 oz glasses of water within 15 minutes.
3. Do not empty your bladder after you've started to drink. The pelvic exam will be done first so that you can empty your bladder as soon as possible.