

## What will happen if there is something wrong?

If the baby is not alive, one of the senior midwives in the clinic will come and talk to you and your family about what happens. Sometimes it is not certain if the baby is alive, it may be too small to tell. In this situation you will be asked to come back in a week to check.


If something else is seen then one of the senior doctors who scan will be asked to see you and check what is wrong. If twins are diagnosed you will be referred to see the consultant concerned.

For further information please contact the Ultrasound Department direct on 0151 702 4072

Liverpool Women's Hospital  
Crown Street  
Liverpool  
L8 7SS

Telephone - 0151 708 9988

Visit our Web site at [www.lwh.org.uk](http://www.lwh.org.uk).

Liverpool Women's Hospital   
NHS Trust

LWH/09/07.02

Liverpool Women's Hospital   
NHS Trust

Liverpool Women's Hospital   
NHS Trust



## Your Booking Scan

## Ultrasound Scans

Everyone who attends the hospital is offered a scan at the first visit. This is called the booking scan. This leaflet explains what happens and why it is done. You do not have to have this scan. (If you choose not to have it please tell the midwife, receptionist or sonographer before they start the scan). The person undertaking the scan will answer any questions you may have.

## What is Ultrasound?

Ultrasound is high frequency sound which the human ear cannot hear, and is made by a device called a transmitter. To obtain an image of your baby the transmitter must touch the skin surface without any air in the way so a gel is always placed on the skin before scanning.

## Is It Safe?

There are no known harmful effects with the medical use of ultrasounds. Use over 30 years and studies in animals and humans have shown no good link between the use of pregnancy ultrasound and any bad outcomes in babies when they are born. There is presently no scientific basis for believing that low levels of ultrasound in maternity care can produce any damage in mothers or babies. The pressure of the transducer on the lower abdomen does not cause miscarriage even when a woman is having vaginal bleeding before the ultrasound examination.

## Who Performs Ultrasound Scans?

Interpreting ultrasound is a skilled job and the person doing your scan will have been specially trained. He or she may be a radiographer with extra ultrasound qualifications (a sonographer), a midwife or a doctor who has been trained in obstetric ultrasound.

## What will happen during the scan?

It is helpful if you try not to go to the toilet before the scan. It helps if the bladder is full. The person doing the scan will introduce themselves. After a few brief questions you will be asked to lie on the ultrasound couch. You will be asked to expose your lower abdomen and some jelly will be put on it. During the examination the room lighting is often dimmed to make it easier to do. The scan will then take about 5 minutes. When finished they will turn the screen towards you and show you the baby. After the scan is done you are free to ask questions, and the sonographer will try to answer these. Sometimes it is necessary to scan the pregnancy at the early stage with a special probe that is placed just inside the vagina. This will often give clearer pictures than the more routine abdominal scan. This scan requires you to have an empty bladder and will be explained to you in more detail by the person doing the scan.

There is no risk that the pregnancy is in any way disturbed by this sort of scan and indeed many women find this sort of scan less uncomfortable than with the full bladder required for a conventional scan.

## What is the scan for?

The scan is done for three main reasons.

- 1** An early scan and a measurement of the baby allows very accurate dating of the pregnancy. This can be important later on if there are problems.
- 2** The scan will tell that the baby is alive. Sadly some babies die very early in the womb without you knowing and without miscarrying.
- 3** The scan can tell if you are carrying twins.

Very occasionally the baby may have a serious abnormality which we can see early in the pregnancy.