

A copy of this patient information sheet should be given to the patient or parent/legal guardian/ other person* to read carefully and allow time to ask any questions about the procedure. The patient information sheet should be included in the patient's medical record.

In this information sheet, the word 'you' means the patient unless a parent, legal guardian or other person is providing consent on behalf of the patient, in which case the word 'you' means the parent, legal guardian or other person when used in the context of the person providing consent to the procedure.



1. What is an ultrasound and how will it help me?

Ultrasound scans look at internal organs, including arteries and veins. Ultrasound can be used to help diagnose, screen or monitor a variety of conditions. Some procedures benefit from being done using ultrasound guidance. This can reduce the risk of some complications or make the procedure less invasive.

Ultrasound images are produced by passing soundwaves into the area being scanned.

An ultrasound machine includes a computer, a display screen and a transducer. The transducer is a small hand-held device, that looks like a microphone, and is pressed against the skin.

Ultrasound does not use x-rays (ionising radiation).

Ultrasound is generally a painless procedure so the patient will not need anaesthetic or pain relief medication. There may be mild discomfort if scanning a part of the body that is tender.



Image: Clinician performing an ultrasound on a child patient.
ID: 1771579178. www.shutterstock.com

Preparing for the procedure

There are different steps required before your scan, depending on the area of the body being scanned. Some ultrasounds need you to have a full bladder to help certain body parts show up more clearly on the scan. Sometimes you might need to fast (not eat or drink) before the scan.

The Medical Imaging department will give instructions on how to prepare for the procedure.
(Clinician to tick appropriate box[es])

- Fasting (no eating or drinking before the scan)
- Full bladder (drinking a particular amount before the scan and do not wee until after the scan)
- No special preparation required



SWP19596

For a parent/legal guardian/other person of a patient having an ultrasound

To prepare the patient for this procedure and to ease their concerns, tell them what they can expect to happen during the procedure. This information sheet will assist you with this.

We welcome your help and support in preparing the patient for the procedure and in explaining why it's so important to lie still.

At the discretion of the procedure staff a parent/adult may be invited into the procedure room to support the patient.

At most sites other children are not permitted to be in the procedure room, and they must be supervised at all times by another parent/adult.

During the procedure

The lights in the room will be dimmed so images on the screen can be seen more clearly.

Clothing may need to be moved away from the area being scanned.

A gel will be applied to your skin over the area to be scanned. The gel allows the transducer to slide easily over the skin and helps to produce clearer images. The transducer will be moved back and forth slowly over the area of interest.

You may be asked to hold your breath or move into different positions during the scan.

Once the scan is complete, the gel will be wiped off the skin.

The ultrasound will take between 15 and 60 minutes. The time needed for the scan depends on the body part and type of investigation needed.



2. What are the risks?

There are no known risks from an ultrasound and it is considered to be very safe.

What are the risks of not having an ultrasound?

There may be adverse consequences for your health if you choose not to have the proposed procedure. Please discuss these with the referring doctor/clinician.



3. Are there alternatives?

Making the decision to have a procedure requires you to understand the options available. Please discuss any alternative procedure options with your referring doctor/clinician.



4. What should I expect after the procedure?

Your healthcare team will talk to you about what to expect after your ultrasound and how and when you will receive the results.

There may be some pain from the probe being applied firmly. An ice pack and/or simple pain relievers may help.



5. Who will be performing the procedure?

Sonographers, doctors, radiographers, nurses, nuclear medicine technologists and medical imaging assistants make up the medical imaging team.

A doctor/clinician other than the consultant/specialist may assist with/conduct the clinically appropriate procedure. This could include a doctor/clinician undergoing further training, however all trainees are supervised according to relevant professional guidelines.

If you have any concerns about which doctor/clinician will be performing the procedure, please discuss this with the doctor/clinician.

For the purpose of undertaking professional training in this teaching hospital, a clinical student(s) may observe medical examination(s) or procedure(s) and may also, subject to your consent, assist with/conduct an examination or procedure on a patient.

You are under no obligation to consent to an examination(s) or a procedure(s) being undertaken by a clinical student(s) for training purposes. If you choose not to consent, it will not adversely affect your access, outcome or rights to medical treatment in any way.

For more information on student care, please visit www.health.qld.gov.au/consent/students.



6. Where can I find support or more information?

Hospital care: before, during and after is available on the Queensland Health website www.qld.gov.au/health/services/hospital-care/before-after where you can read about your healthcare rights.

Further information about informed consent can be found on the Informed Consent website www.health.qld.gov.au/consent. Additional statewide consent forms and patient information sheets are also available here.

Staff are available to support patients' cultural and spiritual needs. If you would like cultural or spiritual support, please discuss this with your doctor/clinician.

Queensland Health recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients will experience the best clinical care when their culture is included during shared decision-making.



7. Questions

Please ask the doctor/clinician if you do not understand any aspect of this patient information sheet or if you have any questions about your proposed procedure.

If you have further questions prior to your appointment, please contact the Medical Imaging department via the main switchboard of the facility where your procedure is booked.



8. Contact us

In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000).

If it is not an emergency, but you have concerns, contact 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Formal arrangements, such as parenting/custody orders, adoption, or other formally recognised carer/guardianship arrangements. Refer to the Queensland Health 'Guide to Informed Decision-making in Health Care' and local policy and procedures.