

Your child is having an Ultrasound. Information for families.

An ultrasound scan uses sound waves to take pictures of your child's body. The sound waves are of a much higher frequency than normal so you cannot hear them. A jelly is used to help conduct them inside the body. This information sheet from Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) explains about having an ultrasound, what is involved and what to expect when your child has one.

An ultrasound scan usually takes between 15 and 30 minutes, depending on the part of the body being scanned.

Your child might need this scan so that the doctors can get detailed pictures of the size and shape of part of their body and how well it is working. The information from the scan is then used to plan your child's treatment.

Ultrasound scans are carried out in the Radiology department, either by a radiologist (doctor specialised in imaging techniques) or a sonographer (someone who specialises in ultrasound imaging).

When you receive your appointment letter

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please inform the department as soon as possible beforehand. Sometimes we can offer the appointment to another child on the waiting list. As so many children and young people need to use our services, we have had to introduce a policy where if a child cancels or does not attend two appointments in a row,

we will close their referral and inform their GOSH consultant.

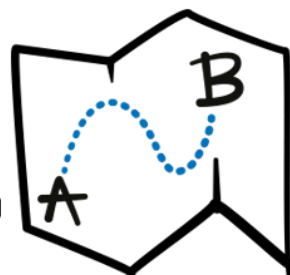
If your child is anxious about the scan, please explain exactly what will happen. Sometimes it helps to have a practice at home using body lotion or hair gel instead of the jelly and using the top of a deodorant bottle or your hand instead of the probe.

Before the appointment

The person bringing your child to the scan should have 'Parental Responsibility' for them. Parental Responsibility refers to the individual who has legal rights, responsibilities, duties, power and authority to make decisions for a child. If the person bringing your child does not have Parental Responsibility, we may have to cancel the scan.

What to wear

Your child may need to wear a hospital gown for this test but can keep a vest or t-shirt on underneath.



The jelly will need to be applied to the skin and it is not possible to scan through clothing or bandages.

The day of the study

Please arrive at the Radiology department at the time stated in your child's appointment letter.

Chaperone

If your child would like a chaperone present during the scan please let us know when you arrive for your appointment. We can usually provide a chaperone of the same gender.

The scan

Please arrive at the Radiology department at the time stated in your child's appointment letter.

If your child is having an abdominal ultrasound scan, they should avoid eating and drinking for four hours before the test. This makes it easier to see all the structures of the digestive system.

If your child is having a renal (kidney) ultrasound, they should drink plenty of fluid before the scan so that the bladder is full. Usually, the radiologist or sonographer will want to take pictures of your child's bladder when it is full and when it is empty. There is a toilet in the ultrasound room so your child can empty their bladder during the scan.

During the scan, your child can watch television on a screen above the bed or read a book or hold a favourite toy. Your child's clothes will need to be loosened around the area being scanned so that the jelly can be applied directly to their skin.

After the scan

When enough pictures have been taken, they will wipe off the jelly so that your child can get off the bed and go home if no further tests or treatment is planned.

The pictures from the scan will be sent to your hospital doctor straightaway through our computer system.

You or your child will receive the results from your referring doctor.

Are there any risks?

No. Ultrasound scans use only sound waves, rather than x-rays or magnetism, to form pictures. The radiologist or sonographer will warm up the jelly before putting on your child's skin but it may tickle a little

Are there any alternatives?

There are various types of imaging techniques, such as x-rays, CT or MRI scans, which can be used instead of or as well as ultrasound scans. These scans use x-rays or magnets to create the pictures. The type of imaging used depends on your child's health and the reason why the imaging is needed. Different types of scan are useful for answering different types of medical question. Ultrasound scans are best for looking at soft tissues, such as the liver, kidneys, bladder, and muscle.

Further information and support

If you have any questions, please telephone the Radiology department on 020 7829 8615, extension 0361.



If your child feels unwell after the test, please phone NHS 111 or attend your local Urgent Care Centre or Emergency Department.

Your feedback

We take all feedback very seriously and want to hear about your experiences on Kingfisher ward. Your feedback helps us to understand what we are doing well but importantly how we can improve. We will give you a feedback card during your stay on the ward but if you haven't received one, please ask a member of staff. You can also provide feedback using this QR code or via our website:



<https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/your-opinion-matters/>

Any concerns?

We know we do not always get things right. As explained above, please do raise any queries or issues with the ward staff in the first instance. We want to help and often we are able to resolve things quickly.

Another way of raising a concern is to contact our **Pals Office** – they are based in the main reception area and open from Monday to Friday from 10am to 5pm. You can also call them on 020 7829 7862 or email pals@gosh.nhs.uk. The Pals team can offer independent advice and support, working with you to sort out a problem along with members of staff.

The **Complaints** team are also available if you want to make a complaint – you can call them on 020 7813 8402 or email complaints@gosh.nhs.uk

Other information

If you require a copy of this information in a different format or language, please contact the Pals team for assistance

