

# Ultrasound - female pelvis

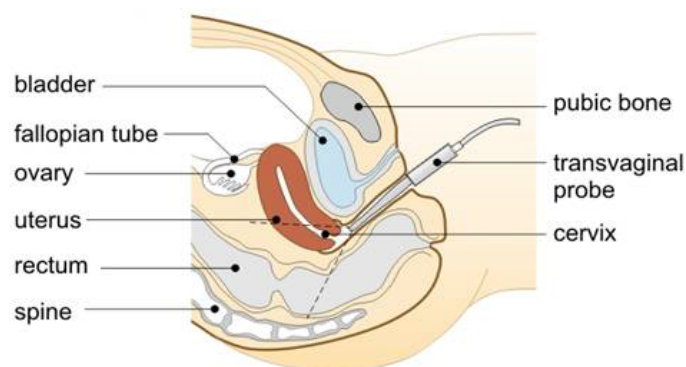
## What is a female pelvis ultrasound?

Ultrasound is a safe and widely used imaging technique. It produces detailed pictures of the body in 'real-time' using high frequency sound waves, which are produced by a special probe, called a transducer. The frequency of these sound waves is higher than that detected by the human ear and when they are reflected by a part of the body they are detected by the probe and used to create images that can be displayed on a monitor.

An ultrasound of the female pelvis might be performed externally (transabdominal), or by using a specially designed transducer inserted into the vagina (transvaginal). The type of examination performed, depends on what your referring doctor has requested and the nature of the clinical condition being investigated.

Transvaginal scans are frequently performed for investigation of the pelvic organs, the first trimester of pregnancy and at other times, to get a close up view of the pelvic organs. Transvaginal imaging provides superior detail than that obtained by a transabdominal approach. The transvaginal scan is performed with an empty bladder and as a result is quite comfortable. The small, sterilised transducer, about the same diameter as a tampon, is placed into a disposable protective cover, and lubricated with gel before insertion into the vagina. The sonographer performing the examination will explain the process in detail and ensure that you are comfortable about the procedure.

Transvaginal scans are performed only if requested or clinically indicated and always with the patients' written consent.



## What preparation is required?

### For adult:

Drink two glasses water one hour prior to appointment and hold. Bladder does not need to be overfilled.

### For teen /non sexually active:

Empty bladder 1.5 hours prior to appointment. Drink one litre water and hold. Must arrive with a full bladder.

## What is involved?

### Transvaginal option

After emptying your bladder, you will be asked to undress from the waist down, lie on the examination couch, and cover yourself with the provided sheet. You will be asked draw your knees up a little, and the transducer is inserted into the vagina. The transducer is about the same diameter as a tampon and is shaped to fit comfortably into the vagina. A protective cover is placed over the transducer and warm lubricating gel is applied to it for ease of insertion. It is gently moved around the inside of the pelvis and images are taken. You might have your lower abdomen pushed with the examiners hand to try and get some of the pelvic organs closer to the transducer for better pictures.

The examination is carried out in 'real time', which means that the images you see on the screen show the inside of your pelvic (lower abdomen) area. Still photographs are also taken during the examination.

At the end of the test, the probe is fully cleaned and sterilised.

### Transabdominal option

If you are under the age of 18 years, not sexually active or have scarring or tenderness of the vagina, a transabdominal approach would be used. This involves warm scan gel applied to your lower abdominal wall to enable the transducer to be gently manoeuvred during the scan. A full bladder is required for this procedure. Please see the section on patient preparation, or telephone the department for further instructions.

## Are there any side effects?

No.

## How long will this take?

This procedure may take up to 30 minutes.

### How do I get my results?

Digital images are immediately available to your doctor and your records will be kept permanently. This occurs through a system called PACS. **If a priority report is requested it will be issued within two hours and faxed or emailed to your doctor, however this can sometimes take up to 24 hours.**

If your referring doctor wants to see you on the day of your examination, please advise the reception staff when you arrive for your appointment, so the appropriate information can be made available for you to take to your doctor.

### How much will this cost?

Please ask reception staff of the cost involved at the time of booking your appointment.

### Important

It is important to bring with you your referral, previous x-rays and any other tests (only if previous ones were not done at Cabrini or I-MED).

### Questions

For more information or to make an appointment, please contact Cabrini Medical Imaging using the relevant number below.