



ULTRASOUND EXAM

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REASONS FOR AN ULTRASOUND

- ◇ To confirm you're pregnant and
make sure that your baby is
developing in the uterus

- ◇ To check to see if you're pregnant with twins, triplets or more (also called "multiples")
- ◇ To check your baby's age and growth
- ◇ To determine your due date
- ◇ To check your baby's heartbeat, muscle tone, movement, tone and surrounding fluid
- ◇ To screen for birth defects, like spina bifida or heart defects

Screening means determining whether your baby is more likely to have a health condition. A positive result doesn't necessarily mean that your baby has this condition.

- ◇ To help perform other optional prenatal tests, like amniocentesis, or chorionic villus
- ◇ To examine your ovaries and uterus
- ◇ To check for pregnancy complications such as a miscarriage

What happens after an ultrasound?

Your provider may want to do more tests, called *diagnostic* tests, to determine the health of your baby and any potential birth defects.

TYPES OF ULTRASOUNDS

- ◇ Transabdominal ultrasound, which is the most common type of ultrasound. You will likely be asked to have a full bladder for this examination. You lie on your back and your provider covers your stomach in a thin layer of gel. Then, your provider will move a small transducer across your abdomen. The transducer sends sound waves through your tissues, and an image of the baby can then be seen on a

TV monitor.

- ◇ Transvaginal ultrasound, which is done through the vagina. This type of ultrasound is usually done early in pregnancy or if the baby is difficult to see. A thin transducer

Ultrasound exams are safe for you and your baby. This method uses sound waves to detect your baby.

will be inserted into your vagina. You may feel pressure from the transducer, but it should not be painful.

- ◇ Other types of ultrasound examinations may be used under special circumstances. You should ask your provider about the procedure before the exam.