



Obstetric Ultrasound

At Canberra Specialist Ultrasound we are passionate about delivering the very best ultrasound imaging service for the benefit of all our patients. We bring together a nationally and internationally renowned team of highly experienced doctors and medical imaging professionals from across the country into a caring and dedicated environment.

Ultrasound of your pregnancy

Your doctor has requested that you have an ultrasound of your pregnancy. This examination will provide valuable information that will assist your doctor in managing your pregnancy to ensure the best possible outcome for you and your baby.

Doctors rely on ultrasound to monitor the progress of a pregnancy as it uniquely provides high resolution imaging without adverse side effects and is completely free of ionizing radiation. Ultrasound has been used for over 50 years to monitor the progress of pregnancy and no adverse outcomes have been attributed to its use.

At Canberra Specialist Ultrasound we have assembled a highly experienced obstetric imaging team who utilise the very latest real time 2D, 3D and 4D imaging equipment to provide accurate diagnostic information about the progress of your pregnancy.

We also understand that your obstetric ultrasound is an exciting social and bonding time as we produce the very first pictures of your baby.

Our goal is to combine the highest quality diagnostic reports and imaging of your pregnancy with a family friendly and welcoming environment.

Preparation

All obstetric examinations require you to have a moderately full bladder.

You will need to complete drinking 600ml of water one hour prior to the scan and refrain from going to the toilet.

It is not appropriate for you to be in physical discomfort with an overfull bladder as this is unpleasant for you and detrimental to the quality of the examination.

Please feel free to go to the toilet and relieve some pressure if required. We understand the anxiety an over full bladder brings and this is why we choose a 600ml preparation.

What happens during the scan?

The sonographer will discuss the progress of your pregnancy with you. At Canberra Specialist Ultrasound we combine knowledge of your clinical history with our high quality imaging to maximise the diagnostic value of each examination.

It is important that you communicate any concerns you or your doctor may have to the sonographer so they can tailor the examination to your individual circumstances.

Warm gel is applied to your abdomen and a small hand held probe is used to produce real time images of your pregnancy. Pressure may occasionally be applied with the probe.

Obstetric examinations may vary greatly in time from 15-60 minutes depending on the information being sought and the position of the baby. An Accredited Medical Sonographer conducts the obstetric ultrasound in close collaboration with our medical specialist sonologist who will also produce the final report for your doctor.



Types of Obstetric Scans

Early pregnancy

Scans are often performed to assess the progress of your early pregnancy, determining the exact gestational age, location and number of pregnancies.

They are also commonly performed to assess bleeding, pain or other symptoms. A scan at this stage establishes the “foundation” of the pregnancy so future management can be planned.

At this early stage of the pregnancy the gestational sac and the baby within it are very small. It is common for a trans-vaginal ultrasound to be performed allowing us to visualize greater detail including your baby’s heartbeat at this early stage. A trans-vaginal ultrasound does not adversely affect your pregnancy.

11-14 week Nuchal Translucency

This is a unique opportunity in your pregnancy to effectively screen for Down syndrome and a variety of other abnormalities in a non-invasive way.

The nuchal translucency is a thin layer of fluid, which collects behind your baby’s neck at this gestational age. It has been established that increased volumes of fluid in this area are linked to an increased likelihood of Down syndrome or other abnormalities. The ultrasound result forms part of a “triple test” which includes risk factors derived from the mother’s age and a maternal blood test. The final risk assessment is generated by purpose built software, which incorporates all 3 variables.

At Canberra Specialist Ultrasound we will spend time with you explaining the results of your nuchal translucency screening.

18-20 week morphology

“Morphology” refers to the anatomical structure of the baby and a scan performed between 18 and 20 weeks gestational age is dedicated to detailed assessment of your baby’s anatomy.

It is the longest and most comprehensive ultrasound you will undertake in your pregnancy.

The Accredited Medical Sonographer performing your scan will spend time examining your baby in great detail.

At Canberra Specialist Ultrasound our staff specialise in ultrasound imaging and use state of the art equipment. Despite this not all foetal abnormalities may be detected using ultrasound at this time.

Late Pregnancy

Scans are often performed late in the pregnancy to assess your baby’s growth and well being.

They are also used to determine the exact position of the placenta and baby prior to delivery.

Late pregnancy scans incorporate assessment of blood flow through the umbilical cord, which produces a sound representing your baby’s heartbeat.



Your Results

Can I find out if its a boy or a girl?

Wanting to no the sex of your baby (or not) is a very personal decision and our experienced sonographers will make every effort to satisfy your wishes.

Ultrasound is only reliable for gender determination after 18 weeks gestation and hence the 18-20 week morphology or late pregnancy growth scans provide opportunities to determine the sex. Gender determination is possible in most cases at these opportunities, however the baby's position may occasionally make it impossible.

Do I get pictures to take with me?

At all obstetric ultrasound examinations we will provide you with a Canberra Specialist Ultrasound USB stick loaded with still images and real time clips for you to have as a keepsake and share with friends and relatives.

We will also provide you with a selection of photogenic printed images.

What about the report?

There will be careful assessment of the images and a final report produced by our Specialist.

Your doctor will receive fast and convenient electronic access to your reports and images.

It is essential that you return to your referring doctor to discuss your report.