

## Procedures/Diagnostic Tests

### Ultrasound

You are scheduled for ultrasound. This test helps your doctor examine your body organs to find possible abnormalities. The test uses sound waves that are above the level of human hearing. Ultrasound is painless and uses no x-rays.

To do the test, a transducer will be used. This is a hand-held device that emits sound waves into the body, then returns the echo to a monitor. The test will be done in the ultrasound suite of the Diagnostic Radiology Department.

#### Preparation

Preparation varies depending on the organs to be examined.

#### Abdominal ultrasound

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the day of the test.

#### Pelvic ultrasound

You will be asked to empty your bladder, then drink 40 ounces of fluid. This fills up the bladder and allows the pelvic organs to be seen more clearly.

#### Thyroid, parathyroid, testicular, breast ultrasound

No special preparation.

#### Procedure

- You will be asked to lie on an examination table.
- Warmed gel will be put on the skin over the body area to be scanned. The gel makes the skin smooth so that the transducer can move easily over your skin.
- The test lasts about 1 hour.

#### After the procedure

When the test is over, and if you are not scheduled for other tests, you may eat and drink whatever you like. You may resume your usual activities unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

If you have questions about the procedure, please ask. Your nurse and doctor are ready to assist you at all times.

#### Special instructions

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

Products/resources named serve as examples and do not imply endorsement by NIH. The fact that a certain product/resource is not named does not imply that such product/resource is unsatisfactory.

National Institutes of Health Clinical Center  
Bethesda, MD 20892  
1999

Questions about the Clinical Center?  
<http://www.cc.nih.gov/comments.shtml>

