

Abdominal Ultrasound

What is an abdominal Ultrasound?

An ultrasound of the abdomen is an exam to look at the organs inside your abdomen such as your liver, pancreas, gallbladder, or kidneys.



How does the ultrasound work?

Ultrasound sends sound waves into the body using a transducer, a hand-held device that sends and receives sound waves. For the exam, the sonographer will apply warm gel to your abdomen and place the transducer against your skin to take pictures. When the sound waves reflect back to the transducer from inside the body, an image is created on the screen. Ultrasound does NOT use radiation.

How should I prepare?

- Do not eat or drink for 8 hours before this exam
- Wear loose-fitting clothing that is easy to take off and put on

How long will it take?

30 to 45 minutes

Why would my doctor order this?

- Abdominal pain
- Abdominal bloating
- Weight loss
- Abdominal injury
- Appendicitis
- Other

What will happen during the exam?

You may be asked to change into a hospital gown so that the ultrasound gel does not get on your clothes. You will lie on your back while the sonographer applies the warm gel to your abdomen and move the transducer to take the pictures. He/she may ask you to hold your breath for 10-15 seconds at a time in order to help with the exam. The ultrasound is fairly easy and painless. If you are having abdominal pain, you may feel some discomfort during the exam, so please let the sonographer know if this occurs.

How will I get the results?

After all of the images are obtained, they are reviewed by a radiologist who specializes in ultrasound. They will send the results to your doctor who ordered the exam. In some cases, the radiologist may review the preliminary results with you after the exam is over.