



Ultrasound



What is an ultrasound?

An ultrasound is an exam that uses sound waves to view and make pictures, or images, of parts of your child's body. The ultrasound "camera" (transducer) is placed directly onto the skin. This camera sends sound waves that bounce off the organs in your child's body to create an image on the screen.

What types of ultrasounds are done at Children's?

We can use ultrasound to view many parts of the body. The most common types of ultrasounds are:

- **Renal:** images of the kidneys and bladder.
- **Abdominal:** images of the liver, kidneys, gallbladder, spleen, pancreas and bladder.
- **Hip:** images and measurements are taken of the infant hip joint to look for dislocation.
- **Pelvic:** images of the uterus and ovaries.
- **Cranial:** images of the brain in a newborn. We can look through the soft spot (fontanel) to see the brain.

Why does my child need an ultrasound?

Your child's doctor has ordered this exam to get more information about your child's body. Ultrasound is used to see the shape, size and contour of many organs. Other information is also gathered and documented to help your child's doctor plan treatment for your child.

How is the ultrasound done?

You are allowed to be with your child during the ultrasound. After your child lies down on the exam table, the ultrasonographer will place gel on the area of the body to be imaged. It's important to remind your child that the ultrasound doesn't hurt. There is no need to change clothes, but we ask that you dress your child comfortably. There are televisions in every ultrasound room, and you and your child may decide to watch a show. This distraction can help ease anxiety.

How do I prepare my child?

Talk to your child about the ultrasound. Explain what will happen and why it is an important test. There are no needles, and the ultrasound generally does not last more than 10 to 20 minutes. While many children can get restless, it is important to tell your child that if they are very still, the exam will be faster. Also, remind your child that the room will be a little dark, but you will stay with them until it is over.

A special diet is needed the night before and the morning of the exam for some types of ultrasound. Here are eating, drinking and other instructions for each type of ultrasound:

Renal

Your child can eat and drink before a renal ultrasound, but please avoid gas-producing foods for 24 hours before your child's appointment.

Renal Doppler

Your child cannot eat or drink for a period of time before an abdominal ultrasound:

- For ages newborn to 3 years, your child may not eat or drink for 3 hours before their appointment time.
- For ages 3 to 6 years, your child may not eat or drink for 6 hours before their appointment time.
- For ages 6 and up, your child may not eat or drink for 8 hours before their ultrasound appointment time.

It is fine to take needed medicines with small sips of water.

Abdominal

Your child cannot eat or drink for a period of time before an abdominal ultrasound:

- For ages newborn to 3 years, your child may not eat or drink for 3 hours before their appointment time.
- For ages 3 to 6 years, your child may not eat or drink for 6 hours before their appointment time.
- For ages 6 and up, your child may not eat or drink for 8 hours before their ultrasound appointment time.

It is fine to take needed medicines with small sips of water.

Limited Abdominal

Your child may eat and drink like normal before this exam.

Abdominal Doppler

Your child cannot eat or drink for a period of time before an abdominal ultrasound:

- For ages newborn to 3 years, your child may not eat or drink for 3 hours before their appointment time.
- For ages 3 to 6 years, your child may not eat or drink for 6 hours before their appointment time.
- For ages 6 and up, your child may not eat or drink for 8 hours before their ultrasound appointment time.

It is fine to take needed medicines with small sips of water.

Pelvic

A full bladder is needed for a pelvic ultrasound. Please have your child drink 24 to 36 ounces of clear liquids, beginning 1 hour before the appointment time. It is important that your child does not empty their bladder by using the restroom. As soon as the ultrasound is over, your child may use the restroom.

Cranial

Your child may eat and drink like normal before this exam.

Hips

Your child may eat and drink like normal before this exam. Babies who have a dry diaper and were recently fed do better during the ultrasound.

Testicular

Your child may eat and drink like normal before this exam.

To Learn More

- Radiology
206-987-2089
- Ask your child's
healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask
your child's nurse.
- From outside the
hospital, call the
toll-free Family
Interpreting Line
1-866-583-1527.
Tell the interpreter
the name or extension
you need.
- For Deaf and hard of
hearing callers
206-987-2280 (TTY).

Spinal

Your child may eat and drink like normal before this exam.

Upper or Lower Extremity Doppler

Your child may eat and drink like normal before this exam.

How do we check in for the appointment?

Arrive 20 minutes before your scheduled appointment.

- Seattle Children's Main Campus 4800 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105.
Use Whale Parking. Check in at Whale 4 registration desk.
- Bellevue Clinic and Surgery Center, 1500 116 Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004.
Park in the underground parking garage. Check in at 2nd floor registration
desk.