



TRANSVAGINAL ULTRASOUND EXAMINATION

You have been referred to Sydney Ultrasound for Women because of the highly regarded expertise of our sonographers and specialist doctors in performing and interpreting obstetric and gynaecological ultrasound images.

Most of the anatomical structures that require assessment in the lower abdomen and pelvis can be seen using an ultrasound transducer placed on the lower abdomen (i.e. transabdominal ultrasound examination). However, there are some pelvic structures that can only be seen clearly using an ultrasound probe gently placed into the vagina (i.e. transvaginal ultrasound examination; also known as a 'TV' or 'internal' scan).

Both assessments are safe and associated with minimal or no discomfort. However, because of the internal nature of a transvaginal ultrasound examination, it understandably raises anxiety in some women. We therefore provide the following to help you better understand the procedure.

How is it performed?

A transvaginal examination is usually performed immediately following the transabdominal ultrasound assessment. You will be asked to go to the toilet to empty your bladder. On return to the ultrasound room you will be provided instructions and left alone to remove your underwear and lie on the examination bed, covered by a sheet and with your feet on a lowered platform.

The sonographer will then return to the room and cover a sterilised transvaginal ultrasound transducer with a latex sheath (please let the sonographer know if you are allergic to latex), and lubricate it with some gel. With your consent, the sonographer will gently and slowly insert a small part of a narrow ultrasound transducer into the vagina. You may opt to insert the transducer yourself if you think this may be more comfortable for you. The transducer is a long instrument but only a small portion (about the length of a tampon) is placed in the vagina, with the remainder of the instrument remaining outside the body so it may be held at an appropriate distance away from you. During the course of the examination the sonographer will move the transducer slowly from side to side to obtain the necessary views. Sometimes the sonographer will also need to gently push on your lower abdomen at the same time to improve the clarity of some structures.

We appreciate that medical assistance may provoke anxiety and the presence of pathology may make the examination uncomfortable for some. So please raise any concerns you have during the course of the assessment with the sonographer so that she may modify or stop the examination in accordance with your wishes.

A transvaginal ultrasound assessment is safe. However, some women will have a small amount of 'spotting' following a transvaginal assessment due to contact of the ultrasound with the cervix. This is expected and not of any concern.

Other information

Transvaginal ultrasound does provide superior ultrasound images of some pelvic structures for the interpretation of the reporting doctors. However, a transvaginal ultrasound examination will only be performed with your consent. You will be asked to sign a consent form before commencing the transvaginal assessment once the sonographer is assured you understand what the procedure involves. Of course, you may withdraw your consent at any time.

You are welcome to have a support person with you in the room during the assessment, if you felt that would be helpful to you.

Our sonographers welcome any questions you may have about your ultrasound examination