

Having an Prenatal Ultrasound Scan at 18 to 20 Weeks

You are having a prenatal ultrasound. You might also hear it called a pregnancy or an obstetrical ultrasound.



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About the prenatal ultrasound scan

This scan is usually done around 18 to 20 weeks of your pregnancy. It gives a lot of information about the pregnancy, such as:

- baby's size and position
- how baby's body and organs are growing
- baby's heart rate
- position of the placenta related to the cervix
- position of the umbilical cord
- amount of fluid around the baby

We call this an "anatomy scan". It is usually the most memorable scan for parents. This is when you get to see your baby.

Who does the ultrasound scan

A health professional called a sonographer does the ultrasound scan (say *sun-ah-grah-fer*). You might also meet a radiologist, specialist in prenatal care (perinatologist), nurse, or support aide.

Our team can be male, female, or gender diverse. If you prefer a specific gender or you would like a hospital chaperone, please tell the booking clerk when scheduling the appointment. We can try to accommodate your request.

Your ultrasound scan results

We send the results of your scan to the care provider who ordered it and to your family doctor. This can take 7 to 10 days. Make an appointment with your care provider to review the results.

We know pregnancy can be both exciting and stressful, and you might have questions. While we can answer some of the questions, most will likely need to be answered by the doctor.

About your appointment

Please arrive early for your appointment. Give yourself time to find parking and check in at Medical Imaging before your appointment time.

Bring with you government-issued photo identification and your BC Services Card (personal health number).

Your appointment can take up to 60 minutes. If you are pregnant with more than one baby, it can take longer than 60 minutes to complete the scans.

If you cannot keep the appointment, let us know as soon as possible. We will try to reschedule you for another day. If you are late, we might have to reschedule you for another day.

If you do not speak or understand English well enough to have medical conversations, please let us know when scheduling the appointment. We can arrange for a medical interpreter. You do not pay for this.

Please arrange childcare for your children.

Do not bring children with you to your appointments. We do not have anyone to look after children and they cannot come into the procedure room with you.

Bringing a support person

You are welcome to bring one support person with you. This can be anyone important to you who you want to share the experience with, such as a partner, family member, or friend. If you need a support person with you during the ultrasound scan, please speak to our Receptionist or the sonographer.

The first part of the scan is a medical scan. Your support person waits outside the exam room until the part is complete.

The second part is when your support person can join you in the room. Together, you get to see your baby on the ultrasound screen. We will do our best to make sure this time is special for you.

Preparing for your ultrasound scan

You must come with a **full bladder**.

- About 1 to 2 hours before your appointment, drink four 8-ounce glasses or 1 litre of water.
- Do not empty your bladder before the scan. If you feel uncomfortable, talk to the Receptionist.

During the ultrasound scan

We ask you to expose the area being scanned. We will keep you covered as much as possible.

Before starting the ultrasound, the sonographer does these 3 things:

- Reviews your health history and reason for scan
- Asks for your consent to do the scan.
- Dims the lights in the room (this makes it easier to see the screen).

During the ultrasound, the sonographer:

- Asks you to lie on your back.
- Puts ultrasound gel on your abdomen (this will be cool to the touch).
- Moves the transducer around your abdomen while viewing the ultrasound screen.
- Puts a little pressure over certain areas to take images. This should not hurt. If it does, let us know.
- Gives you a towel to wipe off the gel when finished.

If you are having trouble holding your bladder or are in an uncomfortable position, let us know.

While the sonographer focuses on completing the medical part of your scan, we ask you to save your questions until this part is finished.

Learning your baby's gender

Before the scan begins, please tell the sonographer if you **do** or **do not** want to know the possible gender of your baby.

During this 18 to 20 week prenatal scan, we do our best to see your baby's gender. Sometimes, we cannot see the gender because of the baby's position. For example, the baby's legs might be crossed or the baby is facing away the direction of the scan.

If we can see the gender clearly, we include it in the report we send to the care provider who ordered the scan and to your family doctor. The sonographer is not allowed to tell you the baby's gender.

Ultrasound Baby Pictures

At the end of the scan, the sonographer can select and print images from the ultrasound for you. We do not allow anyone to take pictures or videos during the scan.

If you want a copy of all images from the scan or the results of the scan, please ask at our Reception about how to do this.

Locations

Abbotsford Regional Hospital	604-851-4868	Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre	604-533-3308 Ext. 63926	Ridge Meadows Hospital	604-463-1800
BC Women's Hospital	604-875-2900			Royal Columbian Hospital	604-520-4642
Burnaby Hospital	604-434-4211	Langley Memorial Hospital	604-533-6405	R.W. Large Memorial Hospital	250-957-2314 Ext. 234
Chilliwack General Hospital	604-795-4122	Lions Gate Hospital	604-984-5721	Sechelt Hospital	604-885-8608
Delta Hospital	604-946-1121	Mission Memorial Hospital	604-814-5188	Squamish Hospital	604-892-5211
Eagle Ridge Hospital	604-469-3172	Peace Arch Hospital	604-535-4510	St. Paul's Hospital	604-806-8006
Fraser Canyon Hospital	604-860-7711	Powell River General Hospital	604-485-3282	Surrey Memorial Hospital	604-588-3308
		Richmond Hospital	604-244-5104		