

A pregnancy is a wonderful phase in every woman's life - a period of anticipation and excitement. All pregnant women are offered some tests and scans, essentially to ensure that the baby is normal and that the pregnancy is progressing well.



This leaflet gives you information on ultrasounds done in pregnancy.

Why should I have a scan and are they safe?

Ultrasounds are safe in pregnancy. The purpose of having a scan is to make sure that the dates are correct, the baby is formed normally and is growing well. The fluid around the baby allows us to see the baby as if we are looking through a glass pane. So a normal prenatal ultrasound examination of the fetus assures us that the little one is doing well.

When should one have scans in pregnancy?

Scans are recommended in pregnancy at three points of time. An scan in early pregnancy before 10 weeks is not routinely recommended but may be advised

1. To confirm pregnancy if the urine test is not clear, if periods are irregular or if there have been earlier miscarriages. This also helps tell us how many weeks the pregnancy is and therefore accurately give a due date
2. If there is any suspicion that the foetus is not growing well (bleeding or spotting) and there is a threatened miscarriage
3. If there is a suspicion that the pregnancy may be growing outside the uterus (ectopic)

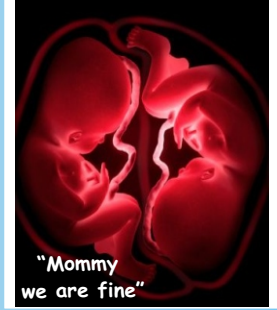
1 First Trimester Scan (11 - 14 wks)

2 Target Scan (20 - 22 wks)

3 Growth Scan (32 - 36 wks)

1. First Trimester 11 - 13 week scan

This is often the first scan that is advised in a pregnancy. This is an important scan and is done to confirm that it is a singleton or multiple pregnancy, the dates and assess the baby's growth up to his point.



During this scan, we can see the fetal head, spine, upper and lower extremities, stomach, urinary bladder and to a certain extent the fetal heart. We can therefore look at the major organs of the baby and assure ourselves that things are normal. Sometimes to see the baby better, an internal (vaginal) scan may be needed.

All babies have a small amount of fluid behind the neck which is called "Nuchal translucency". The measurement of the thickness of this fluid is recommended during a scan done at this time. This by itself, or in combination with a blood test, helps in predicting the risk for Down syndrome. (see leaflet on FTS)

If a twin pregnancy is identified it is possible to accurately determine whether they are monochorionic (sharing the same placenta) or dichorionic (having separate placentae). Twins sharing same placenta need close monitoring and the First trimester scan report helps the obstetrician in planning further course of management of this pregnancy

2. The Target scan 18 - 23 weeks

The 18-20 week scan is like a clinical examination of the fetus. During this scan, the head, face, heart, lungs, stomach, bladder, kidneys and limbs of the fetus are thoroughly scanned. Fetal activity is also observed during scanning. The umbilical cord, location of the placenta, which gives nutrition to the baby and the amniotic fluid that surrounds the fetus are examined. The length of the cervix of the uterus is measured.



In some instances, a "Doppler Study" is performed to evaluate the blood flow to various parts of the baby especially the placenta and the brain. Blood flow to other organs may be studied in indicated cases.

It is important to remember that majority of babies are normal. Birth defects are seen only in 1-2% of pregnancies. In some cases, there may be some minor variations observed during the scan. This should not cause anxiety and the expert can help to understand these findings better. Some abnormalities though may not be picked up on ultrasound.

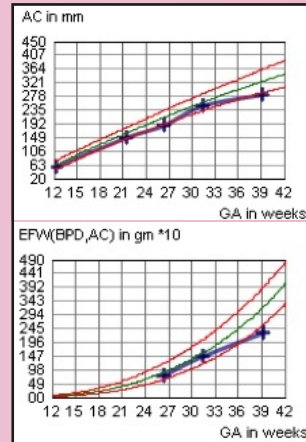
Sometimes, because of the position of the baby, or the presence of scars on the mother's abdomen or the thickness of the abdominal wall, some organs may not be easily seen. In such cases you may be asked to wait / come back to scan again to see the details.

3. Growth scan done at 32 - 33 weeks

The growth of the baby is monitored between 30-34 weeks. At this time, the fetal head, abdomen and femur are measured and plotted on a graph to assess the growth.

During this scan, a detailed evaluation of all the organs and limbs may be difficult due to fetal position and relatively less space around the baby. In some situations, a doppler study may be indicated to study blood flow to the baby.

Performing the scan requires skill and concentration, so the sonographer may be quiet for short periods of time, which is entirely normal. After the initial checks and measurements are completed the baby will be shown on the screen and the parts explained.



The time taken for one scan is variable depending on visibility, fetal position, presence or absence of abnormalities. In some cases, the fetus would need to be seen by more than one operator and if necessary on another day. This is a normal process which is done to ensure quality. The sonographer will explain the reason why she/he recommends a repeat scan and will arrange an appointment.

For all mothers-to-be!

Every pregnancy is to be enjoyed and cherished and every baby is precious. A small number of women can have problems in pregnancy and therefore antenatal screening with scans is offered to all. Scans have to be done well and done at the right time in pregnancy to ensure that we get the right information

Thank you for visiting MediScan. We would like to share your joy once the baby is delivered. Please send us an SMS, email us or simply call us and give the following information as soon as your baby is delivered:

1. MediScanID	6. Date of Visit	Any other information about the mother or baby you would like to share with us
2. Name of the mother	7. Name of your baby	
3. Gender: Boy / girl	8. Date of birth	SMS to: 97104 48487
4. Delivery: Normal/ Cesarean	9. Birth weight	email: babyfeedback@mediscan.org.in
5. After birth cried / not cried	10. Needed additional care for feeds / in NICU	

Fetal Master Health Checkup

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