

What is a pelvic ultrasound?

A pelvic ultrasound is a radiology test that sends sound waves through the body to get pictures. It shows organs and structures in the female pelvis. The pelvis is the lower part of the abdomen and includes the following:

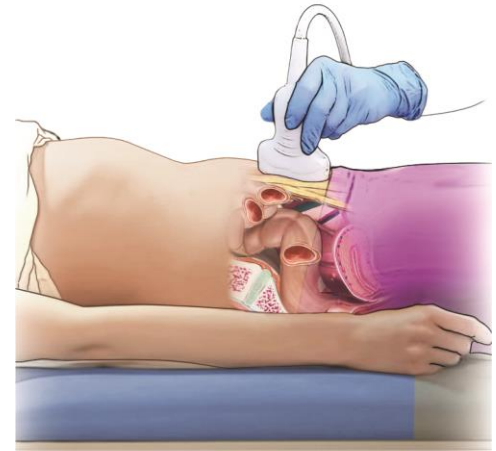
- Uterus
- Cervix
- Vagina
- Fallopian tubes
- Ovaries

Your care team may order a pelvic ultrasound if you are having pelvic pain or bleeding that is not normal. There are 2 ways to do a pelvic ultrasound – transabdominal or transvaginal. The method used depends on the reason for the ultrasound. You may have just 1 or both done.

A sonographer is the person who does the ultrasound test. They will tell you which test they are doing before they do it.

Transabdominal ultrasound

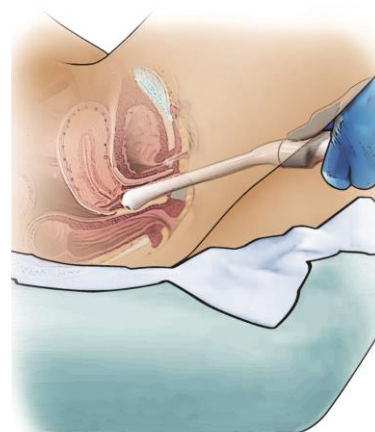
A transabdominal ultrasound is done by putting gel and the probe on the skin of your lower abdomen. The probe sends the sound waves through the skin to get images of the organs under the skin.



Transvaginal ultrasound

A transvaginal ultrasound is done by putting a long, thin probe into the vagina.

- The probe will be covered by a special glove with gel on it.
- The probe will get pictures by rotating and gently moving in different directions inside the vagina.
- The movement of the probe depends on your body and the areas your care team needs to see.



In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Pelvic ultrasound, continued

How do I prepare for it?

For a transabdominal pelvic ultrasound:

- You should have a full bladder. This helps get better pictures of the pelvic organs.
- You may have to drink several glasses of water to fill up your bladder.
- Most often, you will not need to stop eating or be put to sleep for a pelvic ultrasound.

For a transvaginal ultrasound:

- You should urinate right before the test.
- Your doctor and the sonographer will explain the test to you.
- You can ask any questions that you have.

How long does it take?

Most often, it takes 30 to 40 minutes to do both tests.

Is the transvaginal ultrasound painful?

No, the test is not painful. You may feel some pressure when the probe moves in the vagina. The probe is curved to fit the shape of a vagina. Gel on the probe also helps prevent pain.

Do I have to shave before?

You do not need to shave. Pubic hair does not affect the pictures.

What if I am on my period or menstruating?

It is OK to get the test during your period. Bleeding does not affect the pictures or test.

What happens after?

There is no special care after a pelvic ultrasound. Your doctor may give you instructions after the test depending on your symptoms.

A radiology doctor will review the pictures first. Your care team will talk with you about the test results.

Are there any side effects?

There are no side effects from ultrasound exposure at the levels used in a pelvic ultrasound.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.