

Patient Information - Breast Ultrasound

Department of Radiology – New QEII Hospital

What is an ultrasound of the breast?

An ultrasound scan builds up an image of the inside of the breast. It uses sound waves of a frequency above the range at which the human ear can hear. A small handheld sensor is pressed against the skin surface. It both generates sound waves and detects any echoes reflected back off the surfaces and tissue boundaries of internal organs. The sensor can be moved over the skin to view the breast from different angles. The images are displayed on a computer screen and recorded for subsequent study.

Are there any risks from the procedure?

No, there are no known risks and it is considered to be very safe.

Can I bring a friend/relative to my appointment?

Yes, you may be accompanied, but friends and relatives are not allowed in the examination room. Due to the limited size of the waiting room we would be grateful if friends or relatives would use the waiting area in the main reception of the Breast Unit.

What happens during the procedure?

The radiologist or radiographer will ask you about the breast problem you have. Once you are lying on the couch, your breast will be examined to check for the position of any lumps. A gel will be applied to your skin over the area of the breast to be scanned. This gel allows the sensor to slide easily over the skin and helps to produce clearer images. The lights in the room will be dimmed, so that the images on the screen can be seen more clearly. The radiologist or radiographer will be beside you, slowly moving the sensor over your skin while viewing the images on the screen. Upon completion, the gel will be wiped off and you will be free to get dressed.

How long will it take?

The scan usually takes approximately 10 minutes and should not cause any discomfort.

When will I get the results?

After the scan, the images will be reviewed by the radiologist or radiographer who will prepare a report which is sent to your consultant, this normally takes approximately seven days.

Feedback

When you attend your hospital appointment you should be offered the Friends and Family Test survey asking you the question, “**How likely are you to recommend our service to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?**”. We welcome your comments about what was good about your visit and what would have made your experience better. Your feedback is anonymous and is used to help improve the services we provide to all our patients.

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