



What to Expect During Your Prenatal Ultrasound Exam

We are here to support you through your pregnancy journey, and we hope this guide helps you prepare for your upcoming ultrasound. Pregnancy ultrasounds are essential to monitoring your baby's growth and development. Depending on your stage of pregnancy, a different type of ultrasound is performed, each with its own purpose and preparation.

General Information for All Ultrasounds:

- You will not hear your baby's heartbeat - only a visual heart rate tracing will be recorded.
- Results will be reviewed by a radiologist and sent to your doctor for discussion.
- Images can be accessed through Pocket Health (more info at the end of this document). Printed images may be provided if possible.
- No phone, camera, or video capture is allowed during the exam.

Here's what to expect at each stage:

First Trimester Ultrasound (Less than 16 Weeks)

Purpose of the Exam:

- Confirm the health and viability of your pregnancy
- Establish gestational age (stage of pregnancy)
- Determine the number of fetuses
- Evaluate basic fetal anatomy

Preparation:

Drink **1 liter of fluids 1 hour before your appointment** and do not empty your bladder.

What to Expect:

- You will lie on an examination stretcher while a sonographer applies hypoallergenic gel to your lower abdomen.
- The exam will take approximately 30 minutes.
- The sonographer will use a transducer to capture images of your baby.
- A radiologist will review the images and send a report to your doctor (the sonographer cannot provide results).



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- You will not hear your baby's heartbeat - heart activity is documented but no sound is produced.
- One support person may accompany you if required. They will be asked to sit at the head of the stretcher and will not be able to view the ultrasound screen.
- A transvaginal ultrasound may be required for additional imaging. This involves inserting a small transducer into the vagina and is safe for pregnancy. It is performed with an empty bladder.

Second Trimester Ultrasound (18-22 Weeks - Anatomy Scan)

Purpose of the Exam:

- Evaluate fetal growth and development
- Check for birth defects and other abnormalities

Preparation:

Drink **1 liter of fluids 1 hour before your appointment** and do not empty your bladder.

What to Expect:

- The procedure is similar to the first trimester ultrasound, with hypoallergenic gel applied to your lower abdomen.
- The exam will take approximately 30-60 minutes.
- A radiologist will review the images and send a report to your doctor (the sonographer cannot provide results).
- One support person may accompany you. They may be asked to wait until the end of the exam to join you, at which point the sonographer will share the screen.
- You will not hear the baby's heartbeat - heart activity is documented but no sound is produced.
- Images will be available through Pocket Health, and a printed image may be provided if possible.
- A transvaginal ultrasound may be necessary for additional imaging (done with an empty bladder).
- You may need a follow-up ultrasound if additional images are required. You will be contacted to schedule another appointment.





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Third Trimester Ultrasound (After 27 Weeks)

Purpose of the Exam:

- Assess fetal presentation, growth, and overall health
- Evaluate the placenta, amniotic fluid, and fetal blood flow

Preparation:

No special preparation is required.

What to Expect:

- The ultrasound will take approximately 30 minutes and follows the same process with hypoallergenic gel applied to your abdomen.
- A radiologist will review the images and send a report to your doctor (the sonographer cannot provide results).
- One support person may accompany you. They may be asked to wait until the end of the exam to join you, at which point the sonographer will share the screen.
- You will not hear the baby's heartbeat - heart activity will be recorded visually, but no audible sound is produced.
- Images will be available through Pocket Health, and printed images may be provided if possible.
- A transvaginal ultrasound may be necessary for additional imaging (done with an empty bladder).

PocketHealth

To access your ultrasound images, sign up for PocketHealth.

You may choose to sign up for a free account that provides basic access to your images, or you may choose to upgrade to a paid account. More information can be found at <https://www.pocket.health/en-US/qh/intro>, or open the webpage using this QR code:





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Thank you for reviewing this guide to prenatal ultrasounds at Brockville General. The health of you and your family is important to us. We hope this guide was helpful. If you have further questions about your ultrasound, consult your care provider.

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