

Ultrasound

Your child is scheduled for an ultrasound at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota.

Date: _____

Test time: _____

Check-in time: _____

Children's - Minneapolis
2525 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404
(612) 813-8200

Children's - St. Paul
345 North Smith Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
(651) 220-6147

Children's West
6050 Clearwater Drive
Minnetonka, Minnesota 55343
(952) 930-8600

Please bring a list of your child's medicines and your insurance card with you. If you have questions about your insurance coverage for these services, or any special referral requirements, please contact your insurance company directly. They will advise you about your plan's coverage.

A parent or legal guardian must accompany children younger than 18 years old.

What is an ultrasound?

An ultrasound is a safe, painless test that uses sound waves to produce pictures of body organs and tissues. No radiation is produced.

How is the test done?

A technologist (ultrasonographer) will take you and your child into the exam room. Your child will be asked to lie on a padded exam table. The lights in the room will be dimmed. You may sit in a chair next to your child.

The technologist will apply a warm gel to a transducer (which looks like a microphone) and gently rub it across your child's skin. The transducer sends sound waves through the body. Your child will not feel the sound waves.

As the sound waves travel through the body, they send echoes back through the transducer to the computer. The computer makes an image of the sound wave patterns, and the technologist takes pictures of these images. You and your child can see these images on a monitor during the ultrasound. Ultrasounds are usually painless; children may feel slight pressure as the technologist moves the transducer over the skin.

The radiologist will check the images to make sure they are complete before you leave, and will send a report to your doctor.

Can I be with my child during the test?

You are welcome to stay with your child. The ultrasound takes about 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the part of the body being viewed.

What should we do before the test?

Depending on age, your child may be asked not to eat or drink anything, including water, before the test. A staff member or your child's doctor will tell you how long, if at all, your child should stop eating or drinking before the ultrasound. There may be different instructions if your child will have sedation or more tests in radiology on the same day.

Read and discuss this information with your child. Answer as many questions as you can.

To learn more about preparing and helping your child cope with this test, call the child life department. Child life specialists are trained to help children understand and cope with medical procedures and can offer advice on how to talk with and support your children. There is no charge for child life.

Children's - Minneapolis (612) 813-6259
Children's - St. Paul (651) 220-6465
Children's West (952) 930-8773

How should I prepare my child?

Children are usually less afraid and feel more successful when they know what to expect and what is expected of them. You know your child best. The amount of detail you give will depend on your child's age and developmental level, reactions to previous health care experiences, and degree of anxiety about this test. Talking about it can help increase comfort with the test, which will make the procedure easier for both of you. Most children benefit when you use simple words to explain:

- why the test is needed. "To help find out how your (_____) is working" or "To help find out why you are having problems with _____."

- which parts of the body will be involved.
- what your child might see, hear, and feel—for example, the dimly-lit room, warm gel, the transducer moving across skin (kind of like moving a computer mouse).
- where parents or other significant care providers will be during the test: "I/we will be with you the whole time."
- that it is okay for hospital staff to touch your child's body, including private parts if necessary, for this test.
- that questions are welcome at any time.

For many children, a big concern is whether or not the test will hurt. Assure your child that although there may be some discomfort, it will only last a few moments. Remind your child that the test is important because it helps find out how the body is working inside.

How can I support my child during this test?

Before the appointment, you and your child can:

- practice lying down and being "as still as a statue."
- practice relaxing. Imagine being in a favorite place or doing a favorite activity.
- pack comfort items, such as a stuffed toy or blanket, some familiar books or quiet toys, a pacifier for very young children. Older children and teens may want to bring an iPod® or a hand-held video game.
- talk about how much your child wants to know about the test while it's happening. Some children want to be told each step in advance and also while it's happening. Others do not want all the

detail; they simply want to be distracted and supported. Be sure to share your child's wishes with the staff once you are here.

During the test

Research is clear that parents are most helpful to their children during stressful times when they offer distraction, rather than apologies.

- Praise your child often during the test. Be specific to behaviors, such as “You’re holding still. Good for you!” or “You’re doing just what we asked you to do!”
- Talk about familiar, positive things – what your child likes, places you’ve enjoyed, activities you’re planning as a family, fun times you’ve had, successes.
- Imagine the places, things, or people you’re talking about and describe them, or have your child describe them to you. Ask open-ended questions that encourage conversation rather than those that require just a yes or no answer. For example, “Tell me what you’d like to do when we go to the pool” works better than, “We’re going to have a great time when we go swimming, aren’t we?”
- Sing songs together. Play games that require thinking, such as spelling words or adding and subtracting out loud. Ask young children such things as which animals live on a farm or in the zoo and the sounds they make, or to name all the people in their family or class, and so on.
- Read the books you brought, hold a toy so your child can see and play with it, play “Can you guess?” and give clues about people and pets you know, things you see in the room.

What can we expect after the test?

Your child may go back to normal eating and activity after this test.

You will receive the results from the doctor who ordered the test.

What else do we need to know?

On the day before the test, you may pre-register online at www.childrensmn.org. Please do this before 3 p.m. If you prefer, you can call the admitting office.

Children’s - Minneapolis (612) 813-6231
Children’s - St. Paul (651) 220-6878
Children’s West (952) 930-8600

A family member or friend, age 18 or older, may stay with your child. Siblings may not be in the room during the test. Please have an adult stay with them in the waiting room, or sign them into the Sibling Play Area (if 2 years or older). Call to ask about hours:

Children’s - Minneapolis, 2nd floor
(612) 813-7051
Children’s - St. Paul, 1st floor
(651) 220-7150

Plan to allow extra time before the appointment, to check your children into the Sibling Play Area.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child but provides general information. If you have questions or need more information about the test, call the radiology department at the site checked on page 1.

Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota
Patient/Family Education
2525 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
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