ABDOMEN & RENAL ULTRASOUND

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

What is an abdominal ultrasound scan?

Ultrasound scans are an effective way of assessing a number of the organs in the abdomen. High-resolution images of the liver, aorta, spleen, kidneys, gall bladder, pancreas, urinary bladder and prostate are attainable. Since ultrasound does not involve radiation and is non-invasive it is commonly employed as the initial imaging investigation for abdominal pain and other abdominal symptoms. Not all causes of pain are identifiable on the ultrasound and further investigations may be requested.

What preparation is required?

Upper Abdominal Ultrasound

You must have nothing to eat for six hours before your examination. You can take all of your usual medications with a small amount of water prior to your appointment.

Renal Ultrasound

You will need to finish drinking one litre of water-based fluid one hour before your appointment so you arrive with a full bladder. Try not to empty your bladder.

If you get to a point where you are very uncomfortable you may partially empty the bladder but try to retain as much urine as is possible so that the scan can still be performed.

Duration of the examination

An upper abdominal ultrasound usually takes 20 minutes. This may vary according to the reason for the examination.

A renal ultrasound usually takes 20 minutes also. This may vary according to the reason for the examination.

What will happen during the examination?

You will lie on an examination table and the sonographer, who will perform your scan, will apply ultrasound gel to your abdomen. This allows for good contact between the skin and the ultrasound transducer. For each abdominal organ, there are routine images that will be sought. There may be times when the sonographer scans an area of your abdomen where you are not tender. This is to build up a complete picture of the abdomen and look for causes of referred pain. Where a renal scan is requested, we usually look at the urinary bladder first. This means that if you have a full bladder you should be able to empty the bladder just a few minutes after the scan begins.

Timing of your scan

As an upper abdominal examination requires you to fast for 6 hours it is preferred this examination is performed in the morning. This reduces the likelihood of the abdominal organs being obscured by bowel gas. It is also for your comfort as you are already fasted from the night before.

Are there any risks?

Ultrasound scans use high frequency sound waves when producing images. Ultrasound has been used in medicine since the 1950's and there have been no confirmed adverse effects attributed to diagnostic ultrasound exposure in this time. No ionizing radiation is used in ultrasound.

After the examination

The images will be reviewed and reported by our Radiologist. For your convenience we can generally deliver the imaging and report to your doctor by the next working day. Urgent cases are reported immediately after the scan and results sent to your doctor.

Please bring with you:

- Your request form
- All previous relevant imaging
- Medicare and any healthcare or concession cards

For more information on this examination please contact our clinic on (08) 7634 6677 or email admin@midnorthimaging.com.au

Excellence in Ultrasound