MID NORTH IMAGING

VASCULAR ULTRASOUND ARTERIES OR VEINS

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

What is a vascular ultrasound?

A vascular scan assesses the arteries or veins in the body. It is also known as a duplex or Doppler scan. A vascular ultrasound primarily assesses blood flow and may help diagnose many conditions including:

- abnormal blood flow patterns
- blood clots
- narrowing or blocked arteries (stenosis)
- venous insufficiency (poorly functioning valves in your legs)
- aneurysms

Common vascular ultrasounds requested by your doctor

Abdominal aorta ultrasound (AAA)

This scan assesses the aorta, the major artery in the abdomen from the heart to pelvis. Measurements of the aorta will be taken to see if there is an aneurysm. You will need to fast for 6 hours for this scan.

Carotid arteries

This scan assesses the major blood vessels on each side of the neck. Images will be taken measuring the blood flow to see if there are any areas narrowing. No preparation is required for this scan.

Leg Veins

This scan assesses the vessels of the legs for blood clots or varicose veins. It involves checking for blood flow, and each section of the vein may be compressed by the sonographer. The leg or calf may be gently squeezed to assess the competency of valves and demonstrate blood flow within the veins. One or both legs may be scanned. No preparation is required for this scan.

Leg Arteries

This scan assesses the blood flow in the major arteries of the leg to look for areas of narrowing or blockages (stenosis). The mid to lower part of the abdomen (aorto iliac) may also be assessed.

Arm Veins

This scan assesses the veins in the arms typically for blood clots. It involves checking for blood flow, and each section of the vein may be compressed by the sonographer. One or both arms may be scanned. No preparation is required for this scan.

Arm Arteries

This scan assesses the blood flow in the major arteries of the arm to look for areas of narrowing or blockages (stenosis). No preparation is required for this scan.

Timing of your scan?

Vascular ultrasounds can be performed at any time. It is preferable to schedule an abdominal aorta ultrasound in the morning after fasting. 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. Please advise us at the time of booking if you are a diabetic to ensure your scheduled appointment accommodates any dietary requirements.

Duration of the examination

The duration of your scan will depend on the type of examination requested. Typically, a scan will take approximately 30 minutes.

What will happen during the examination?

You may be asked to change into a gown depending on the clothing that allows easy access to the area being scanned, such as two-piece clothing (separate upper/lower garments). The sonographer performing the examination may begin by taking a vascular history specific to the examination being performed. Ultrasound gel will then be applied to the area of interest and an ultrasound transducer will be used to scan the relevant anatomy. Patient position will vary depending on the examination. During this procedure, it is common to hear whooshing noises which are a representation of the blood flow or pulse. When the sonographer has completed the scan, the images will be assessed by a Radiologist.

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.

Excellence 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