



Ultrasound

What is an Ultrasound?

Note: Child-friendly language in green.

An ultrasound uses high-frequency sound waves to create an image of internal body structures such as tendons, muscles, joints, blood vessels, and internal organs. The sonographer (**person who helps take the pictures**) will put warm gel on a transducer (**wand**) and rub it over the part of your child's body that is being scanned.

Why is it done?

Ultrasound can be used to diagnose causes of pain, swelling, and infection within various parts of the body. Some kids need contrast (**picture medicine**) to help make their pictures more clear. If your child needs contrast for his/her scan, it will be given through an IV (**tiny, soft straw placed into a vein using a small needle**) in his/her arm or hand or through a urinary catheter (**small, soft tube**). For more information about your child's ultrasound, please speak to your referring physician.

What can I do to help my child?

- Child life specialists are available to help your child better understand and cope with the scan.
- Parents/caregivers are also encouraged to be with their child during the scan, though there are some exceptions. Women who may be pregnant cannot be in the fluoroscopy room during the procedure.
- Please ask a staff member for more information about these options for support!



Child Life

Children's National Hospital Department of Radiology is staffed with Certified Child Life Specialists. Child life specialists are trained to address the emotional and developmental needs of children and their families during healthcare experiences and can provide procedural preparation and support before and during your child's exam. If you would like to speak to a child life specialist before your child's radiology appointment, please call **202-476-3338** or email **childliferadiology@childrensnational.org**.

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