

Screening by Ultrasound

What is an ultrasound?

Ultrasound, also known as “a sonogram” is a non-invasive method used to view the developing baby within the uterus. It uses sound waves to create an image of the baby.

What can ultrasound do?

Ultrasound can be used to estimate the age of the baby, and identify or rule out some physical birth defects. Ultrasound is also used during prenatal diagnosis procedures such as CVS and amniocentesis, to improve the safety and accuracy of the procedures.

What happens during the ultrasound?

During the ultrasound examination, an instrument is gently moved over the mother’s abdomen. Harmless sound waves are sent and received by the transducer to create a detailed image of the baby. The image is then displayed on the ultrasound monitor and in still pictures or digital computer images. To the trained eye, these images can reveal a great deal about fetal growth and development. Ultrasound is not known to be associated with any risk to the developing fetus or pregnancy.

What does it mean if I have a completely normal ultrasound?

Ultrasound examinations that appear normal are associated with a reduced chance that the baby has certain birth defects or conditions. However, while ultrasound is very useful in detecting birth defects, it is important to understand that not all birth defects will be detected even with the most experienced and thorough scanning. For example, only about half of babies with Down syndrome will have any unusual ultrasound findings on a second trimester ultrasound examination.
