What is an Ultrasound?

Ultrasound imaging, sometimes referred to as sonography is a noninvasive medical procedure used to capture images in real time. They show the structure and movement of organs and blood flowing through blood vessels.

Ultrasound uses sound waves and not radiation to produce images. Ultrasound can be used to evaluate organs and diagnose problems in the thyroid, abdomen, pelvis, kidneys, testicles, and extremities as well as carotid, and renal arteries. We also perform obstetric, doppler, and venous ultrasounds. (For more information ultrasounds specific to women see: Women’s Services)

How Do I Prepare for the Test?

Most ultrasound exams do not require any preparation prior to the exam. Wear comfortable clothing around the area to be scanned. You may also be asked to wear a gown. For abdominal ultrasounds, you will be asked to fast for 6 hours prior to the exam. For pelvic exams, please come to our office with a full bladder. For kidney exams ensure you are well hydrated. Also inform your technologist if you have any old images so they may be used for comparison.

What Happens During the Test?

Our technologist will take a brief medical history. You will be asked to stand, sit, or lie down on the scanning table depending on the part of the body to be scanned. The ultrasound technician (sonographer) will place a clear gel on the area of the body to be imaged. The sonographer or radiologist then presses the transducer against the skin and sweeps it back and forth over the area of interest. The transducer is a small hand-held device that resembles a microphone, attached to an ultrasound machine by a cord. The test is painless to perform. After the exam, the gel is wiped off and you may resume normal activities.

Ultrasounds typically take 30 to 60 minutes depending on the exam performed.

When Can I Expect the Results?

A radiologist will review the images and send a report to your referring physician within one business day. Your doctor will review the report and contact you with the results.

If you have questions regarding your procedure:

Call: 515-226-9810
E-Mail: schedule@iowaradiology.com