

# Getting an Ultrasound

## What is an ultrasound?

- An ultrasound is a type of imaging that uses sound waves to produce photos of organs and soft tissues in the body.
- An sonographer (ultrasound technician) will use a transducer (wand) with a clear jelly and glide it over the area being examined.

## What happens during an ultrasound?

### Part 1: Getting ready

- The technologist will ask some questions about your child and review the test with you.
- Your child will be asked to either remove or lift up items of clothing to reach the area that needs to be examined.
- Your child will then lie on the exam bed.
- We can give your child a blanket if they get cold.
- The technologist will dim the lights in the room so that it is easier to see the images on the computer screen.

### Part 2: Taking the pictures

- The technologist will apply a clear, warm jelly onto the wand and glide it over the area being examined.
- This jelly can be easily wiped off with water and will not stain clothing.
- The technologist might ask your child to turn to their left or right side to take all the necessary pictures and your child may be asked to take deep breaths during the exam.
- While the technologist is taking the photos, your child can watch a show on the TV.
- It is important that they stay as still as possible to get clear images.
- The technologist will have the radiologist review the images and will let you know when the scan is done.

## To schedule a preparation/education session:



A child life specialist (CLS) can help support your child during their ultrasound by explaining it in developmentally appropriate language, suggesting possible coping strategies, and helping to distract them during the test.

If you would like to speak to

a child life specialist prior to your child's radiology appointment, please email

[radiologychildlife@mountsinai.org](mailto:radiologychildlife@mountsinai.org)



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## How can I prepare my child?

Be sure to follow the prep instructions given to you when you schedule the appointment.

### Infants (up to 12 months old)

- Bring comfort items such as a pacifier, blanket, or favorite toy.
- Remember crying is a healthy and normal way for infants to express their emotions.
- You are your child's biggest comfort.

### Toddlers (one to two years old)

- Start preparing your child the day before with simple words.
- Tell your child that they will have pictures taken so that the doctor can learn more about their body.
- Toddlers want to be independent and make their own choices, so you can ask them what comfort items they would like to bring.

### Preschoolers (three to five years old)

- Start preparing your child one to three days before.
- Talk to your child about how the pictures will be taken with the clear jelly and wand.
- Tell your child why they are having the pictures taken.
- You can relate it to any symptoms they might be experiencing.
- Encourage your child to ask questions.

### School age and up (six years old and up)

- Prepare your child at least a few days in advance.
- Tell your child why they are having the pictures taken. You can relate it to any symptoms they might be experiencing.
- Speak to your child about what they might see, hear, and feel during each step of the ultrasound.
- Talk to your child about different ways they can cope including if/how they want to be distracted and if they want to be told what is happening each step of the way.
- Encourage your child to ask questions.

## How can I help as a caregiver?

- Caregivers will be with their child during the ultrasound.
- Before the ultrasound starts, practice putting the jelly on your child's hand to help familiarize them with the feeling.
- This helps show your child that the pictures do not hurt.
- We encourage caregivers to help contribute to a calming environment as your child will look to you for emotional cues.
- During the pictures, you can help distract your child with a show on a tablet, reading a book, or talking with them.



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