Having a Trans-Vaginal (Internal) Scan
Information Leaflet

Introduction

You have been referred for a transvaginal (internal scan) to help assess the health of your pregnancy. This leaflet has been designed to explain what this involves. It may not answer all of your questions, so if you have any queries, please ask the staff who will be performing the scan, who will be happy to help and advise you.

What Is An Ultrasound Examination?

An ultrasound picture is formed by sound waves, which are passed through the body and reflected back as an image. This can be performed trans-abdominally (through the tummy and with a full bladder), but below 12 weeks is usually performed trans-vaginally (internally) as this provides clearer pictures of the womb, ovaries and surrounding structures.

Why Have I Been Booked For A Trans-Vaginal Scan?

The aim of the scan is to assess the health of your pregnancy. You may have experienced bleeding, potting or pain or require a reassurance scan due to a history of recurrent miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy. It is a safe and generally painless procedure. There is no evidence that having a trans-vaginal scan can cause miscarriage or harm a pregnancy. Sometimes there might be a concern that the pregnancy is in the wrong place, what is called an ectopic pregnancy. In this situation, we would advise a trans-vaginal scan, as ectopic pregnancies may not be visible on a trans-abdominal scan.

What Will Happen During The Scan?

You will need to empty your bladder just before the scan and undress from the waist down. A specially designed ultrasound probe is used, that is covered with a protective sheath and lubricating gel. This is gently inserted into the vagina and is then moved into different positions in order to see the womb and ovaries clearly.

What Happens After The Scan?

If the scan shows a healthy pregnancy, you will be discharged and advised to continue with routine antenatal care with your doctor or midwife. If the scan shows any abnormalities, such as a possible miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy, then you will be referred to the Gynaecology Emergency Department, where you will be reviewed by one of the doctors or Advanced Nurse Practitioners. They will discuss the findings and management options with you.

Further information?

If you require any further information about your scan, please contact Gynaecology Emergency Department on 0151 702 4438

Change of appointment – Access Centre on 0151 247 4747

In an emergency, please contact the on 0151 702 4140 for further advice.
This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk