Ultrasound Examination

Ultrasound exams use harmless high frequency sound waves to make detailed pictures of the area being studied. The exam begins with the technician placing a gel over the area to be studied and then running a probe gently over the region and taking pictures of the underlying organs. It is a commonly used test for abdominal, pelvic, and chest complaints. It is also used to follow fetal position and development in pregnancies among other problems.

The exam usually takes 30-40 minutes to complete. For gall bladder studies, it is best to fast (not eat any food) for 8-12 hours to allow bile to accumulate. For pelvic studies, it is best to have a full bladder. This sometimes requires placing a catheter to fill the bladder before the ultrasound. There are no side effects from ultrasound testing. It is completely safe for both mothers and unborn babies. Your ultrasound exam will be evaluated by a radiology specialist and your caregiver will be notified of the findings. Be sure you know how to get your results. Do not assume everything is fine if your caregiver has not reached you.

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