

11 physical conditions (the 20-week scan)

Purpose of screening

This is a screening test that takes place between 18 weeks and 20 weeks 6 days of pregnancy and is commonly called the 20-week scan. It is also sometimes referred to as the mid-pregnancy scan. The scan only looks for 11 different conditions in the baby and cannot find everything that might be wrong.

To check for the 11 conditions, the scan looks in detail at the baby's:

- bones
- heart
- brain
- spinal cord
- face
- kidneys
- abdomen

Screening is your choice. You do not have to have the scan. Some people want to find out if their baby has one of the 11 conditions and some do not. If you choose not to have the scan you can still have all other parts of your routine antenatal care.

The scan

Most scans are carried out by specially trained staff called sonographers. Having the scan does not hurt, but the sonographer may need to apply slight pressure to get the best views of the baby. This might be uncomfortable. A black and white picture of the baby will then be seen on the ultrasound screen. During the examination, sonographers need to keep the screen in a position that gives them a good view of the baby. The screen may be directly facing them or at an angle.

1. You will be asked to lie on a couch.
2. You will then be asked to raise your top to your chest and lower your skirt or trousers to your hips.
3. Tissue paper will be tucked around your clothing to protect it from the ultrasound gel, which will then be put on your tummy.



4. The sonographer will pass a hand-held probe over your skin to examine the baby's body. The gel makes sure there is good contact between the probe and your skin.

The appointment usually takes around 30 minutes.

You may like someone to come with you to the scan appointment. Most hospitals do not allow children to attend scans as childcare is not usually available. Please ask your hospital about this before your appointment.

Safety of the test

There are no known risks to the baby or the mother from having an ultrasound scan, but it is important that you consider carefully whether or not to have the 20-week scan.

You may be offered further tests

Sometimes it is difficult to get good views of the baby. This does not mean there is anything to worry about. If this happens, you will be offered one further scan by 23 weeks of pregnancy. Very occasionally this second scan cannot be completed, for example because:

- the baby is lying in an awkward position
- you are above average weight

In this case you will not be offered another screening scan, but you will be offered an all-over physical examination for your baby after birth.

What the results of this ultrasound scan mean

Most scans show that the baby seems to be developing as expected, and none of the 11 conditions are found.

If one of the conditions is found or suspected, the sonographer may ask for a second opinion from another member of staff. You might be offered another test to find out for certain if the baby has one of the conditions.

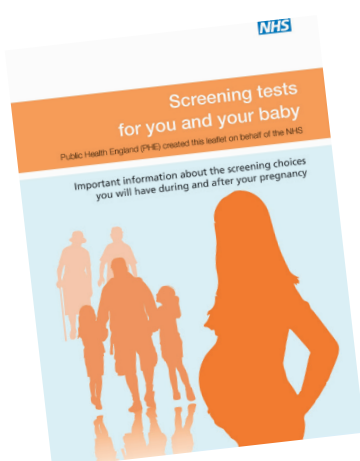
If you are offered further tests, you will be given more

information about them so that you can decide whether or not you want to have them. You will be able to discuss this with your midwife or consultant. If necessary, you will be referred to a specialist, possibly in another hospital.

Scans cannot find all conditions. There is always a chance that a baby may be born with a health issue that scans could not have identified.

- The ultrasound scan showed that your baby appears to be developing as expected
- The sonographer was not able to complete your scan and you are being offered another appointment
The sonographer will try to complete the scan at one more appointment but this is not always possible.
- The ultrasound scan showed that your baby is not developing as expected. We have referred you to a specialist for further discussions

Find out how Public Health England and the NHS use and protect your screening information at www.gov.uk/phe/screening-data



More information

You can get more information from:

- the 'Screening tests for you and your baby' leaflet
- your midwife or hospital doctor
- Antenatal Results and Choices, a registered charity, which gives non-directive support and information to expectant parents making choices on screening in pregnancy. Helpline: 0845 077 2290 or 0207 713 7486 from a mobile phone or www.arc-uk.org

Public Health England (PHE) created this leaflet on behalf of the NHS.

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