Fetal Medicine Unit

Having a cervical scan

Information for patients
Your appointment details

(Woman’s addressograph)

Appointment date: ...................................................................................................................
Appointment time: ...................................................................................................................
Appointment place: ...................................................................................................................

What is a cervical scan?

Your obstetrician has referred you for a scan of your cervix (neck of the womb). The scan is only carried out in those women thought to be at higher risk of giving birth to their baby early (preterm). This may be for various reasons, including a previous preterm birth, treatment at the time of colposcopy, surgery to the cervix, or because you are pregnant with twins or more.

The scan measures the length of your cervix. This helps us to predict the chances of you giving birth to your baby early. If your cervix is normal length (which depends on the number of weeks pregnant you are) then the chances of a late miscarriage or early (preterm) delivery are reduced.

If your cervix is shorter than normal then this can suggest that the chances of giving birth to your baby early are higher than average. In this case your obstetrician may decide to monitor you and your baby more closely. There are several treatment options available, including using medicines and/or insertion of a stitch into the cervix. If you have a short cervix your obstetrician will talk to you about the best treatment for you and your baby.
What’s involved?

The scan is performed internally. It involves inserting a probe into your vagina so that it lies next to your cervix. This is the best way to get an accurate measurement of your cervix. The scan is not painful and does not harm you or your baby in any way. You will need to have an empty bladder for the scan.

The person carrying out the scan may be a doctor, midwife or a sonographer (a person specially trained to carry out ultrasound scans). The doctor may or may not be an obstetrician.

Before we carry out the cervical scan, we will have a quick look at your baby using an ultrasound on your abdomen, to make sure all is well. You will then be asked to undress your lower half and lie on the couch. You will be covered by a sheet or blanket. The scan takes just a few minutes to perform. You will be offered a chaperone (a member of staff to be present with you throughout the scan). Your partner can be present if you would prefer.

This appointment does not replace any appointments you have with your midwife or obstetrician. You will still need to have your normal pregnancy checks. We will not measure your blood pressure or test your urine, so you do not need to bring a urine sample with you. You do not need to bring anyone with you but you are welcome to do so if you wish. It is fine for you to drive home afterwards.

At the end of the scan we will tell you the result. We will also tell you when your next appointment with your obstetrician should be, to discuss further treatment if necessary.
How to contact us

We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to telephone us:

**Obstetric Secretary**
Tel: 01865 851 165

This service is offered through the Oxford Fetal Medicine Unit. It is designed to identify those pregnancies at higher risk that may benefit from increased observation and monitoring.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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www.ouh.nhs.uk/patient-guide/leaflets/library.aspx