What is a growth scan?
A growth scan checks how well your baby is growing. Within the Oxford University Hospitals we offer routine growth scans to all women at around 36 weeks of pregnancy.

You may be offered additional growth scans if you or your baby need extra monitoring.

What do I need to bring to the scan?
Please bring your blue notes with you. You don’t need to come with a full bladder.

Family, friends and children
It is a good idea for your partner or support person to accompany you for your scan. However, it is best that other people and children do not come in for the scan with you, as they may distract your Sonographer (the person carrying out the scan).

Small children often become bored or frightened when the lights are turned off during the scan. If you do decide to bring your child or children into the scan and they become distressed, they will have to leave the room to allow the Sonographer to concentrate. This means that the person accompanying you may then miss out on the scan. We highly recommend that you arrange childcare to cover your appointment.

What happens during the scan?
During the scan we will:
• measure your baby’s head, waist and thigh bone
• assess the amount of amniotic fluid around your baby
• observe your baby’s movements
• record the position of your baby and the placenta
• measure the blood flow in the cord and in some vessels in your baby’s head.
These measurements will help us assess your baby’s wellbeing and growth. It will also allow us to generate an estimated fetal weight at the time of the scan.

We plot all the measurements on a chart. This enables us to assess your baby’s growth in comparison to the average growth of babies at the same stage. We can also compare the rate at which your baby is growing using information from your previous scans.

Please note that if you are overweight the scan measurements may be less accurate.

**Scan findings**

The majority of scans show that the baby is developing as expected and no problems are found.

Sometimes, the measurements will show that a baby is smaller than expected. This is also known as Small for Gestational Age (SGA). Your baby may also be larger than average.

**If the measurements of your baby are much smaller than average**

If your baby measures much smaller than average, we will closely monitor your pregnancy and your baby’s wellbeing. This may mean that we ask you to see a doctor, have your baby’s heartrate monitored, or have further scans performed. Very occasionally, it might be necessary for the baby to be delivered earlier than anticipated.

**If the measurements of your baby are much larger than average**

In general there is no reason to be concerned if your baby is larger than average. It will not necessarily change your plan for delivery and we do not routinely offer Caesarean sections for delivery of larger babies.

One test we might offer, if you haven’t been tested already in your pregnancy, is for gestational diabetes, as this can be a cause for a baby to grow larger than expected. Your doctor or midwife will discuss this with you.
Scan pictures

We are not able to provide you with pictures after 28 weeks gestation, as your baby will have outgrown the picture size. Please do not purchase a scan token for pictures for this scan or after this stage in your pregnancy.

Further advice

If you have any further questions please contact your midwife or hospital doctor.

For appointment queries please contact:

**Maternity Ultrasound Department (JR)**
Tel: 01865 221 715
(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm)

**Maternity Ultrasound Department (Horton)**
Tel: 01295 229 464
(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm)

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 **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**