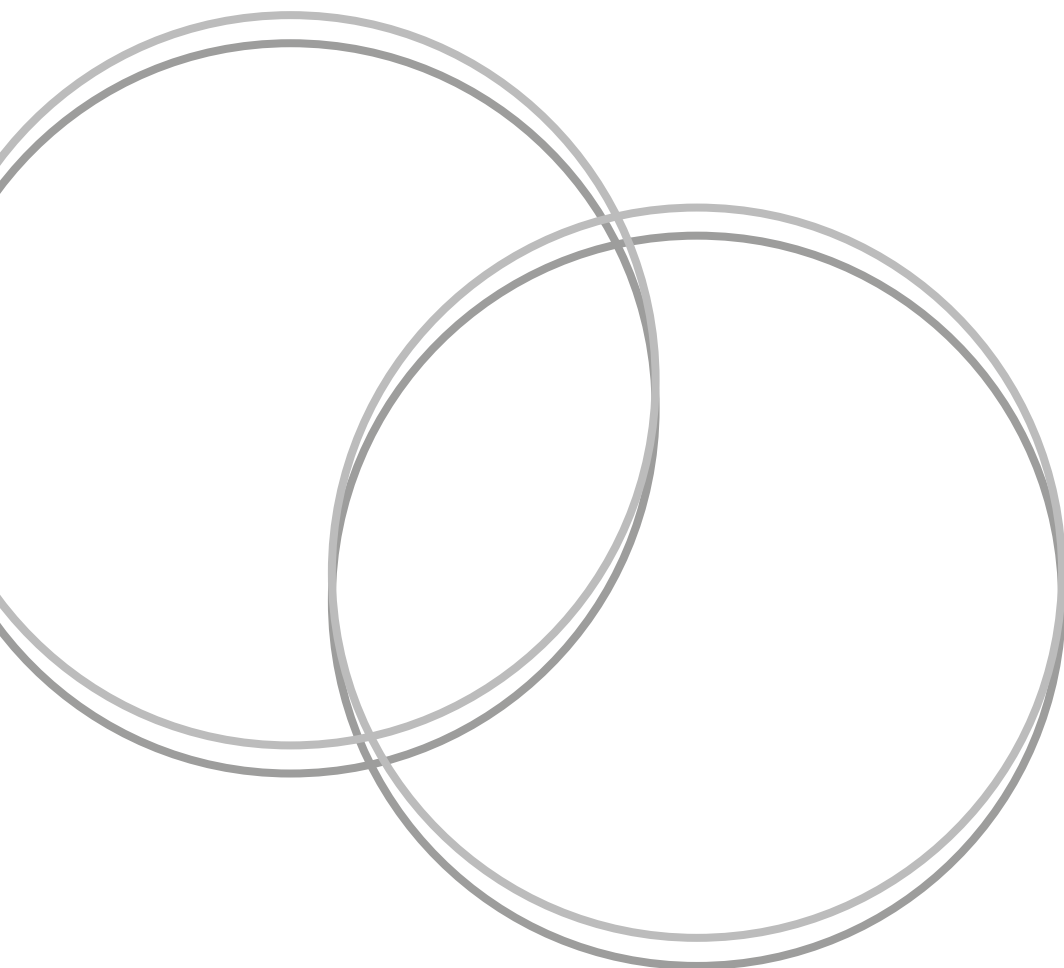




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Growth scans

Information leaflet



Maternity Ultrasound Department

What is a growth scan?

A growth scan is an ultrasound scan that checks how your baby is growing in your womb (uterus). The measurements and other information from the scan help us plan or review the care and monitoring we recommend for you and your baby.

Most growth scans show that a baby is growing as expected.

How do I prepare for my scan?

You do not need to have a full bladder for your scan, but please avoid emptying your bladder immediately before your appointment unless a member of staff asks you to. Emptying your bladder just before your scan can affect assessment of the placenta, making it more difficult to get the images we need.



The **placenta** is an organ that grows in your womb during pregnancy. It gives your baby oxygen and nutrients through the umbilical cord and carries waste away.

Who can I bring with me?

You are welcome to bring your partner or a supporting person with you to your growth scan.

Please do not bring children to your appointment.

Your ultrasound scan is important for finding out information about the health and wellbeing of you and your baby. It is a detailed medical examination which requires the full concentration of the person carrying out the scan.

Visit www.ouh.nhs.uk/maternity for up-to-date information on appointments and scans.

What happens during the scan?

During the scan, we will:

- measure your baby's head, abdomen and thigh bone
- assess the amount of amniotic fluid that surrounds your baby in the womb
- observe your baby's movements
- record the position of your baby and the placenta

Depending on the stage of pregnancy and the reason for your scan, we may also measure the blood flow in the vessels that carry blood to the placenta, or the blood flow in your baby's umbilical cord and head.

Your baby's measurements are plotted on a chart. This helps us estimate your baby's weight and compare their growth with that of other babies at the same stage of pregnancy. We can also compare the measurements with those from earlier scans, for example the 20-week screening scan to assess your baby's growth over time.

What questions will I be asked?

If you are attending for a growth scan, we may ask whether anything has changed since any previous scans you have had in this pregnancy.

How will this information be used?

We will consider the findings of the growth scan alongside any other new information in the context of what is already known about your health, pregnancy and baby. This helps us review whether your existing care and monitoring plan remains appropriate.

What if we cannot get all the images we need?

Sometimes it can be difficult to get all the images and measurements needed at one appointment. This can happen for several reasons, including your baby's position, previous abdominal surgery and fibroids.

If we cannot complete the scan, we will explain why and, if another appointment is needed, we will arrange it at the most appropriate stage of your pregnancy.

What happens after the scan?

We will explain what the measurements and other findings show and whether anything further is recommended.

If further assessment is needed, we will explain why and discuss what happens next. This may include another scan or an appointment with a hospital or specialist team which we will arrange.

We will also show you where to find useful information that is relevant to your individual results, for example, in your **BadgerNotes Personal Timeline**.

What is a maternity scan pathway?

A maternity scan pathway sets out the routine scans, checks and appointments recommended during the rest of your pregnancy.

If you are expecting one baby, you will have been recommended one of five maternity scan pathways after your 20-week screening scan. You should have received a separate leaflet explaining your pathway and what it means for your care.

If you are expecting more than one baby, you will follow a different scan schedule. Your midwife or hospital doctor will explain this to you.

The number and timing of any further growth scans will depend on your pathway and individual care plan. We will explain the recommended timing of your next routine scan or scans if any are required and arrange these appointments for you.

Do Oxford University Hospitals maternity scan pathways follow national guidance?

Yes. All our maternity scan pathways follow national guidance called the Saving Babies' Lives Care Bundle. This guidance is based on the latest available evidence and aims to make pregnancy safer and to improve outcomes for women and birthing people and their babies.

How do I contact the Maternity Ultrasound Department?

If you have any questions or concerns about your appointment, please speak to your midwife or contact us.

Maternity Ultrasound Department (Oxford)

Level 4, Women's Centre
John Radcliffe Hospital
Oxford OX3 9DU
Tel: 01865 221 715

Maternity Ultrasound Department (Banbury)

Antenatal Clinic
Horton Maternity Unit
Banbury OX16 9AL
Tel: 01295 229 464

You can also email either department at:
maternity.ultrasound@ouh.nhs.uk

Opening hours:
Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm

What do I do if I cannot attend my scan?

Scans are most useful when they take place at the planned stage of pregnancy.

Please let the maternity ultrasound department know as soon as possible if you cannot attend. We can then arrange another appointment as close to your original scan date as possible.

Can I decline a scan?

We give you clinical advice and make recommendations based on the information available during your pregnancy. Our advice always prioritises the health, wellbeing and safety of you and your baby. We will explain the benefits and risks of the choices open to you, so that you can decide what is right for you.

You can accept or decline any scan we offer. If you decide not to have a scan we have recommended, we will explain what that may mean, record your decision and continue to care for you.

If you would like extra support when making important decisions, please ask your midwife or doctor and we will arrange it.

What if I have questions or concerns?

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet helpful for everyone having a growth scan. **Please speak to your community midwife** if anything is unclear or worrying you.

No question or concern is too small. We are here to listen and help.

When should I seek advice?

Changes in your baby's movements are important

If your baby's movements become less than usual or their usual pattern changes, or you have other urgent concerns about your pregnancy, please call the Maternity Assessment Unit immediately using the details below.

01865 220 221

The unit is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you have any questions about your pregnancy, pregnancy scan findings, or maternity scan pathway please speak to your community midwife or maternity team.

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

We would like to thank the Oxfordshire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership for their contribution in the development of this leaflet.

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