



First Early Pregnancy Ultrasound Scan

The Ultimate Guide



EARLY PREGNANCY ULTRASOUND SCAN

Early pregnancy can be a very exciting time and often couples want to see their baby as soon as possible.

This scan is available to anyone who wants some reassurance, but particularly for those who are unsure of their dates, have had some bleeding, pelvic pains, concerns, or have felt that their early pregnancy symptoms have disappeared when they should be present.



PURPOSE OF THE EARLY PREGNANCY SCAN

- To confirm intrauterine pregnancy (pregnancy within the womb)
- To determine fetal viability (to make sure the baby is alive and growing)
- To provide accurate gestational dating
- To establish an estimated due date



PURPOSE OF THE EARLY PREGNANCY SCAN

- To identify and measure fetal heart rate
- To determine chorionicity and amnionicity if a multiple pregnancy (how many placentas and pregnancy sacs)
- To examine for obvious uterine and ovarian pathology (please understand that visualisation of these structures is not always satisfactory in pregnancy)



BEST TIME TO GO FOR AN EARLY PREGNANCY SCAN

The heart beat of the embryo can be seen from 6 weeks onwards, therefore, the Early Pregnancy Baby Scan can be performed from 6 weeks 0 days – 10 weeks 6 days from the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP).



BEST TIME TO GO FOR AN EARLY PREGNANCY SCAN

If your menstrual cycle is longer than 28 days it is advisable to wait until you are at least till 8 weeks from your LMP to confirm the viability of the embryo as you may not be as far as your dates suggest.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR A SCAN

You are required to have an adequately full bladder for your early pregnancy scan.

There is certainly no need to be uncomfortably full.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR A SCAN

There is a small chance that a transvaginal scan may need to be performed in order to get a clearer view.

Some may prefer this method of scanning as the resolution of the image is better, improving the accuracy of the measurements and the clarity of the pictures.



WHAT TO EXPECT

During the ultrasound scan, they will assess the position and shape of the gestational sac.

It is important to see the sac within the uterus as this excludes an ectopic pregnancy. And they will look for the presence of the embryo or possibly multiple embryos.

The heart rate is measured to determine viability.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Crown Rump Length

A measurement is taken from the tip of the head to the little bottom, called the crown rump length (CRL). When performed correctly, this measurement is the most accurate way of dating a pregnancy.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Many studies show that this form of dating is more accurate than the first day of the last period or measurements taken at detailed anomaly scan which is carried out at around 20 weeks.

They will also examine the uterus and ovaries for any pathology such as ovarian cysts or fibroids.