

## **Diagnostic Ultrasound - Patient Information**

We hope the following information will help prepare you for the examination and answer some of the questions you may have.

### **What is ultrasound?**

Ultrasound is a sound wave that humans cannot hear. An ultrasound scanner sends these sound waves into your body. The sound waves are reflected back and converted into pictures on the screen. There are no known harmful effects from ultrasound to you or your fetus (unborn baby). What happens during an ultrasound?

- Before the scan, we will record some of your medical history, including details of all previous pregnancies. This information may be important for the review of your scan.
- Your ultrasound will be done by a qualified sonographer or physician. These people have special training in ultrasound. BC Women's is a teaching hospital and during your visit you may be asked to allow a student to watch or scan.
- There are different ways to perform an ultrasound examination. Most often it is done by placing a hand held scanner called a transducer on your abdomen to view your internal structures. Sometimes more information is needed and other methods of performing the scan may be suggested, such as inserting a smaller scanner inside your vagina. The sonographer will explain this to you, if needed.
- Ultrasound is a complex medical test. Sonographers are limited in the amount of information they can give you during your appointment. They cannot tell you the sex of your baby but if you are at least 18 weeks, it can be recorded on your report for your doctor or midwife to review with you. An evaluation of the entire examination is done later the same day by a physician trained in ultrasound. A report will be sent to your doctor(s) and/or midwife.

### **How to prepare for an ultrasound**

Drink lots of water throughout the day of your ultrasound AND drink 3 cups one hour before your appointment. Empty your bladder, as needed. You should not be uncomfortable.

Bring your Care Card and photo ID with you. Please do not wear any perfume as some of our staff have allergies.

### **Who may attend the visit with me?**

One support person will be allowed to observe the examination with you. Small children must be accompanied by an adult other than yourself.

### **How do I rebook my appointment?**

If you need to cancel or rebook your appointment, please contact the Ultrasound Booking Desk as soon as possible by telephone 604-875-2900.

### **Where is the BC Women's ultrasound located?**

The hospital is located at 4500 Oak Street. Once you have entered the hospital site, follow the driveway to BC Women's Hospital Main Entrance #93 (Visitors/Outpatients).

Please check-in at Ultrasound Reception Desk located off the main entrance lobby.