

## What is a Breast Ultrasound?

Breast Ultrasound is the examination of the breast tissue using an ultrasound scan. Ultrasound uses high frequency soundwaves to produce images of the body that are displayed on a screen.

Ultrasound of the breast helps to distinguish fluid filled lumps in the breast (cysts) from solid lumps which may be cancerous or benign (non-cancerous). It is often useful to examine the breasts of younger women because the breast tissue is much denser than it is in older women, and this density can make it harder to detect an abnormality if a mammogram is performed.

Ultrasound is also used to diagnose problems such as complications from mastitis (an infection that occurs most often during breastfeeding), to assess abnormal nipple discharge, to assess problems with breast implants and to guide the placement of a needle during biopsies.

## How do I prepare for a Breast Ultrasound?

No preparation is necessary for this examination. However it is useful to bring all of relevant previous examination images and reports for comparison report.

It is advisable to wear a two piece outfit so that only your top has to be removed to provide access to the breast area.

## What happens during a Breast Ultrasound?

You will be asked to remove your top and bra and change into a gown.

You will be asked to lie on a bed and one breast at a time will be examined.

A triangular sponge will be placed behind your shoulder so that you are rolled slightly onto your side. This helps position the breast to make scanning more effective. Gel is applied to the skin and an ultrasound probe (called a transducer) is placed on the breast and gently moved around the breast to examine the breast tissue.

Examination of the armpit (or axilla) will also be undertaken to assess for any enlarged lymph glands (or nodes – a lump or swelling).

## Are there any after effects of a Breast Ultrasound?

There are no after effects of a Breast Ultrasound.

## How long does a Breast Ultrasound take?

The examination takes between 15-30 minutes.

You may be asked if you have a symptoms (like a lump or skin changes) and some questions about these symptoms. This extra information may help the radiologist to understand your ultrasound pictures in order to give an accurate diagnosis.

Sometimes you will be asked to wait and have the images checked by the radiologist. Usually the referring doctor will be contacted upon any concerning findings that need an urgent report and medical attention. You will be referred back to the referring doctor to arrange the necessary further investigations.

## What are the risks of a Breast Ultrasound?

There are no risks from ultrasound. Even if you are pregnant you are able to safely have an ultrasound examination.

## What are the benefits of a Breast Ultrasound?

Ultrasound examination allows the detection and identification of most breast lumps.

This allows doctors to differentiate between cysts and solid lumps. It may also help to decide whether your breast lump may require a biopsy.

Ultrasound can also help to diagnose:

- Complications associated with mastitis (like a breast abscess)
- Problems with breast implants
- Some conditions that cause a nipple discharge

## Who does the Breast Ultrasound?

The examination is performed by sonographers or radiologist, health professionals specially trained and accredited to perform the test. They may be male or female. If you are not comfortable with a male you should let the reception staff know at the time of booking. In cases where the patient is young, a female chaperone may be requested. A female parent, other relative, friend, or male partner can stay with you during the examination if you are more comfortable with this.

## Breast exams NOT offered by us

- Mammograms

Please be aware that we **only provide for ultrasound breast** examination. If you were requested to do Mammogram as well, you can have ultrasound scan with us and arrange the Mammogram at other place with the same referral but within 7 days of the initial scan. However we recommend to have both exams at the same imaging service provider as they complement to each other.

## How do I get my results?

The written report and images will be electronically or physically delivered to your referring doctor as soon as is practicable.

Alternatively you can pick it up or take films only and arrange to fax the report when it is available. Please let us know of your or your doctor's preference.

**It is very important that you discuss the results with your referring doctor so that they can explain what the results mean for you.**

*This information is credited to Inside Radiology, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiology (RANZCR).  
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