

# Morphology Ultrasound

## How long will the procedure take?

The 18-20 week morphology ultrasound usually takes 40-60 minutes.

## Preparation

You will be required to have a full bladder for the examination. Empty your bladder 2 hours prior to your appointment time. Drink one litre of clear liquid over the next hour to fill the bladder. This will allow the lower uterus to be seen properly on the ultrasound images.

It is a good idea to wear comfortable clothing that allows easy access to your entire abdomen.

It is recommended that children do not attend the examination due to it's length and the high level of concentration needed by the sonographer. Distractions can unfortunately lead to abnormalities being missed.

If you have any related previous images from another provider please bring them on the day.

## Image of a Morphology Ultrasound



Profile of a foetal face 2nd trimester.



## Radiology



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### Disclaimer:

The information contained in this brochure is intended as a guide only. If patients require more specific information please contact your referring Doctor.

## What is a Morphology Ultrasound?

The 18-20 week morphology ultrasound is considered part of your routine care during your pregnancy. The examination is performed at this stage in your pregnancy because the foetus (your unborn child) is big enough to assess foetal anatomy and development.

It also provides additional information such as:

- The number of foetuses
- The age of the foetus
- Confirmation of your due date
- The position of the placenta (the organ that supplies nutrients and oxygen to the foetus through the umbilical cord)
- The volume of the fluid around the foetus
- The appearance of your cervix (the neck of your uterus).

The ultrasound is performed for medical reasons to assess the development of the foetus from head to toe.

## Procedure

You will be asked to lie on an examination bed. Water-based clear gel is applied to your skin and an ultrasound probe (called a transducer) is placed on your abdomen and moved around with a sliding and rotation action.

There is usually no discomfort or pressure as the transducer is pressed against your skin. Images are taken during the examination.

Many people wish to know the sex of the baby as it can usually be seen at this time. If you would like to know, ask the sonographer to tell you. Mostly it is straightforward to determine the sex of the baby, but occasionally the sonographer will not be able to tell because of the position of the baby or the quality of the images is not satisfactory enough to view the genitalia. You should also be aware that assessment of the gender is not 100% accurate. If you do not want to know the sex of the baby, tell the sonographer before having the scan.

A number of measurements of the foetus will also be taken during the scan (head size, brain structures, abdomen and bone lengths) to assess the exact size of the foetus. The position of the placenta will be determined to assess whether it is away from the cervix. The cervix will also be assessed to make sure it is closed.

Sometimes the foetus may not be in an ideal position at any stage during the scan to see a particular part of the anatomy. If this is the case you may be asked to return on another day to complete the examination. This should not alarm you and is a common occurrence.

## Risks of Procedure

There are no known harmful effects on humans from standard diagnostic ultrasound examinations.

Unlike x-rays, ultrasound does not use ionising radiation. Its images are obtained using high-frequency sound waves.

There are no known risks to the foetus.