

# ULTRASOUND- ABDOMEN (GALLBLADDER, RUQ ULTRASOUND)

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## WHAT IS AN ABDOMINAL ULTRASOUND?

An abdominal ultrasound produces a picture of the organs and other structures in the upper abdomen. Ultrasound is used to help diagnose a variety of conditions such as: abnormal liver function enlarged abdominal organs, stones in the gallbladder, or an aneurysm in the aorta.

A Doppler ultrasound study may be part of an abdominal ultrasound examination. Doppler ultrasound is a special ultrasound technique that evaluates blood flow through a blood vessel, including the body's major arteries and veins in the abdomen.

## HOW IT WORKS

Ultrasound imaging involves the use of a small transducer and ultrasound gel to expose the body to high-frequency sound waves. Ultrasound is safe and painless, and produces pictures of the inside of the body using sound waves. Because ultrasound images are captured in real-time, they can show the structure and movement of the body's internal organs, as well as blood flowing through blood vessels.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

You will lie on your back on the examining table and may be asked to raise your arm above your head. A clear water-based gel is applied to the area of the body being studied to help the transducer make secure contact with the body and eliminate air pockets between the transducer and the skin that can block the sound waves from passing into your body. The sonographer (ultrasound technologist) or radiologist then presses the transducer firmly against the skin in various locations, sweeping over the area of interest or angling the sound beam from a farther location to see an area of concern better. Images are captured on a monitor and later reviewed by the radiologist.

The scan takes approximately 30 minutes.

## HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- You must have **nothing to eat or drink (including medications)** after midnight the day of the test. If you have an afternoon appointment you must have nothing to eat or drink (including medications) 6 hours before the test.
- Depending on the part of your body getting the ultrasound, you may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and change into a hospital gown

## RESULTS

A radiologist will review your images and send a report to your doctor who ordered the test in 48 hours. You'll get a call from your doctor's office to discuss the results and next steps. To check your results in our secure, online patient portal, My UNC Chart, visit [www.myuncchart.org](http://www.myuncchart.org).