

ULTRASOUND EXAMINATIONS

You will be offered the opportunity to schedule an ultrasound examination during your pregnancy. This procedure is generally performed between 18-20 weeks of pregnancy and must be scheduled in advance with our ultrasound technician, Susie. Ideally, your ultrasound visit will coincide with your 20 week provider visit. During your ultrasound a detailed examination of basic fetal anatomy, due date confirmation, gender reveal, and detections of placental location abnormalities will all be performed. A normal ultrasound exam does not completely exclude the possibility of birth defects, but is known to detect up to 80% of structural abnormalities.

Ultrasound examination of every pregnancy is not yet recommended by all national medical organizations because it is not considered to be “cost effective”. However, most expecting parents desire this test, and most obstetricians feel that the test provides valuable medical information. This has created a dilemma in insurance coverage without proven medical necessity. These qualifying factors include bleeding during pregnancy, serious medical illness in the mother, uncertain due date, etc. A desire for reassurance of normal anatomy and confirmation of fetal sex are not considered to be medically necessary.

Some insurances will pay for one ultrasound exam, and then require proof of medical necessity before paying for additional exams. This means that if an ultrasound exam is performed in early pregnancy for any reason (including bleeding), your 20 week ultrasound may not be covered.

In summary, we feel that all patients should be offered the opportunity to have an ultrasound performed between 18 and 20 weeks of pregnancy. However, if your pregnancy is uncomplicated this is not mandatory and you are free to decline the examination. You should also be aware that insurance benefits for ultrasound exams vary widely, and if your provider orders/recommends this test, it does not necessarily guarantee your insurance will pay. The average cost for an ultrasound exam is approximately \$300.00. Please feel free to discuss any questions regarding this optional exam with your provider.