

Ultrasound: Kidney Transplant Exam

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains how to prepare for a kidney transplant ultrasound exam, how it works, what to expect, and how to get your results.

What is a kidney transplant ultrasound?

Ultrasound exams use sound waves to take pictures of the inside of your body. An ultrasound of a kidney transplant will study your transplanted kidney. This exam will show your kidney's overall blood flow. It will also check blood vessels, both the ones inside your kidney and the ones that connect your kidney to other parts of your body.

How does the exam work?

A *sonographer* (ultrasound technologist) will use a hand-held device that sends and receives sound waves. This device is called a *transducer*.

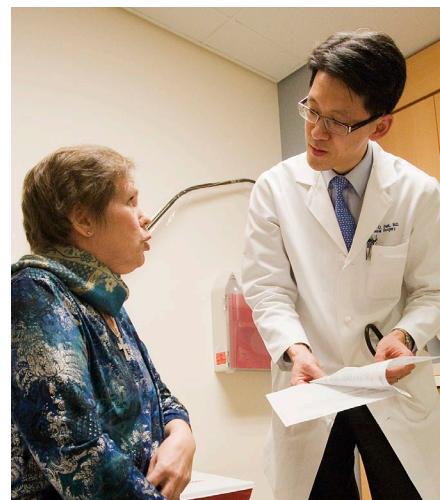
First, gel will be applied to your skin to help the transducer make contact. The sonographer will then press the transducer against your skin. As the sound waves bounce off your body's tissues, images are created. These images will appear on a monitor for your radiologist to view.

How do I prepare?

- Wear a loose-fitting, comfortable, 2-piece outfit. Only your belly needs to be exposed for this exam.

How is the exam done?

- You will lie on an exam table.
- The sonographer will move your clothing away from your belly.
- A warm gel will be applied to the skin on your belly.
- The sonographer will press the transducer against your skin and move it over your belly.



Talk with your transplant team if you have any questions about your transplanted kidney.

- If needed, the radiologist may take more pictures after the sonographer is done.
- If you are having a kidney biopsy, the doctor will remove a small tissue sample from your kidney and send it to the lab to be studied.

How long will the exam last?

The ultrasound exam by itself usually lasts less than 30 minutes. A biopsy by itself usually takes 1 hour.

If you are having a full ultrasound exam and a biopsy, you may be on the exam table for 60 to 90 minutes.

What will I feel during the exam?

- You will feel the sonographer apply warm gel to your belly and press the transducer against your skin.
- We may ask you to roll on your side or change positions.

What if I am also having a kidney biopsy?

If you are having a biopsy of your kidney:

- We will use ultrasound before the biopsy to find a safe area of kidney to be sampled. It will also be used during the biopsy to guide the needle to the correct place.
- The biopsy will be done by a *nephrologist* (kidney specialist). You will have local anesthesia.
- After the biopsy, you will go to 4-South, the post-procedure unit in the hospital. You will stay there for 2 to 4 hours.

Who interprets the results of the exam and how do I get them?

A radiologist who specializes in ultrasound will review the images and send the report to your referring provider. Sometimes, the radiologist may talk with you about early findings when your exam is over.

Your referring provider will talk with you about the results. You and your provider will then decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.

You may also read your results on your MyChart page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call 206.598.6206.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

UWMC Imaging Services -
Montlake: 206.598.6200