



# Early Pregnancy Scans

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## Early Pregnancy Scans – 6 – 12 weeks

Cost: 6-9 weeks €95.00 – 10-12 weeks €120.00

To include photographs and computerised report

### Overview of an Early Pregnancy Scan

The early pregnancy scan is performed to: • confirm the presence of the baby's heartbeat • calculate the gestational age • look for multiples (twins, triplets etc) • site the pregnancy • to confirm that the pregnancy is in the uterus

Towards the end of this PDF, you can also find some commonly asked questions about Early Pregnancy Scans.

### Early Pregnancy Scan-What To Expect At Merrion Fetal Health?

A full bladder is required for this scan. On occasions it will be necessary for an internal ultrasound examination to be performed. On occasions it is possible that you will receive an inconclusive scan result. This is normally due to the fact that it is simply too early to see the pregnancy or the pregnancy is not growing as it should.

If, at your appointment it is was not possible to confirm whether your pregnancy is ongoing or not we will recommend that you be rescanned in 7 – 10 days time. There will be a charge of €60.00 for subsequent Early Pregnancy/Reassurance scans. A scan in early pregnancy is usually performed in the first trimester between 6 – 12 weeks gestation. You may be having a scan for a number of reasons including confirmation of the EDD (estimated date of delivery), to confirm the pregnancy or just for peace of mind. You may have a scan earlier than this if you are experiencing complications in the pregnancy such as bleeding.

When arriving at Merrion Fetal Health you will be met by a member of our Administration Team. If it is your first time with us you will be asked to complete a registration form. You will then be directed to our waiting room where you will await your sonographer. Your sonographer will meet with you in the waiting area and take you to the ultrasound room. Your registration

# Early Pregnancy Scans

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details will be confirmed with by the sonographer before the ultrasound procedure begins.

There are two types of early pregnancy scans; an abdominal scan and a transvaginal scan. An abdominal scan is performed by placing the transducer onto the abdomen of the patient. A lubricating gel is used to facilitate the scan. The process of abdominal scan is non invasive and painless. You will be required to have a full bladder for an early pregnancy scan. Drinking about one pint of water one hour beforehand is normally sufficient to fill the bladder but stop drinking if you start to feel uncomfortable.

A transvaginal ultrasound can detect earlier pregnancies. It is often necessary for the sonographer to perform a transvaginal scan (TVS) in very early pregnancy. A TVS involves the insertion of a probe into the vagina. Transvaginal ultrasound gives a much clearer and enhanced view. If the sonographer feels it necessary to proceed to a TVS the procedure will be discussed with you and your permission sought. Like an abdominal ultrasound a TVS is not painful but may be a little uncomfortable and possibly a little embarrassing.

## **What Will The Sonographer Check?**

When the early pregnancy scan is being performed your sonographer will:

- calculate the gestational age
- check for a fetal heart
- determine the estimated date of delivery
- look for multiples
- will check to exclude an ectopic pregnancy

The ultrasound is available for you to view on a 42" screen which is located on the wall at the end of the ultrasound couch. This allows you to view the images produced by the transducer. At this stage in pregnancy it may not be easy for you to make out what you are seeing on screen but the sonographer will explain what you are looking at.

# Early Pregnancy Scans

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It is our aim to make your visit with us as relaxing, enjoyable and as stress free as possible. If you have any questions before, during the early pregnancy scan or after your visit please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff and we would be delighted to assist with your query.

Some common questions

## 1. Can you see a 2 week pregnancy on ultrasound?

It can be possible to site a gestational sac as early as three weeks from conception, which is five gestational weeks of pregnancy. If a sac is not present, it could be that the mother-to-be has ovulated later than normal. If tests show that the HcG is 1100, an ultrasound may be repeated a few days later. In most cases ultrasound is not carried out at such an early stage.

## 2. Can you see the baby at 4 weeks?

At four weeks of gestational pregnancy, the ball-like formation of cells is forming into embryo (the stage before fetus) and placenta. Therefore if an ultrasound were to take place, the gestational sac may show, looking a bit similar to a tiny dot. In most cases ultrasound is not carried out at such an early stage.

## 3. What can be seen on ultrasound at 5 weeks?

At five gestational weeks of pregnancy, three weeks from conception, it is possible to see the tiny dot, which is the gestational sac. In most cases ultrasound is not carried out at such an early stage.

## 4. Can you feel an unborn baby's heartbeat?

During pregnancy, you may think you feel your unborn baby's heartbeat, when your blood vessels in your tummy pulsate. This is a common mistake to make. However you don't actually feel baby's heartbeat at all during pregnancy.

## 5. Can I have a scan at 6 weeks?

# Early Pregnancy Scans

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Generally this is the earliest a scan will be performed. The six weeks are dated from the date (first day) of your LMP (last menstrual period). Your medical team will recommend a scan if you have experienced pain, bleeding or any other symptoms, that mean that it will be better to confirm viability (if your pregnancy is viable, meaning that your unborn baby has a heartbeat).

## 6. Can you see the heartbeat at 6 weeks?

The heartbeat of an embryo normally starts off at six weeks of gestational pregnancy (dated from the first day of your LMP). This is detected by carrying out a transvaginal ultrasound. Sometimes it isn't possible to detect your embryo's heartbeat until around seven or eight weeks of gestational pregnancy. So you may need to attend the clinic for another scan.

## 7. Can you see a baby on an ultrasound at 7 weeks?

In general by seven weeks it should be possible to confirm your embryo's heartbeat, although in some cases it may only be possible to detect the following week.

## 8. What week do you find out the gender of the baby?

If you choose to find out your baby's gender, then this can normally be detected between week sixteen and week twenty. However this will depend on how the ultrasound goes, in terms of the sonographer being able to see the baby's genitalia. This depends on how baby is positioned.

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