**ULTRASOUND FAQs**

*What is an ultrasound?*

An ultrasound uses high-frequency sound waves to study a person’s internal body structures, without using radiation. A probe called a ‘transducer’ is placed on the skin surface and the reflections of the sound waves off the internal structures is what creates the images.

*Are ultrasounds safe?*

Yes, there is no radiation involved in ultrasound scans and no evidence to suggest it causes any harm to unborn babies.

*Do I need a full bladder for my ultrasound scan? Why?*

A full bladder is required for ultrasound scans of the pelvis, as it allows organs such as the bowel to be ‘pushed’ away to better show other structures. Whilst we understand it is often uncomfortable, a full bladder is absolutely essential for these scans.

*Do I need to fast from food for my ultrasound scan? Why?*

You may be asked to fast (nothing to eat) for 4-6 hours before your scan. Food can cause fluid and gas within the stomach which interferes with the ability of the ultrasound to see surrounding structures.

*Can I still take my medication before my scan?*

Yes, please continue taking any medication which has been prescribed by your doctor unless advised otherwise.

*Do I need to get changed?*

In general, you undress whatever part of your body needs examination and will be given a gown to change into as necessary. Depending on the area you are having scanned you may want to wear loose, comfortable clothing which is easy to move around in.

*How long will it take?*

Examinations can take from 15 minutes to 1 hour depending on the type of ultrasound your doctor has requested.

*How much will it cost?*

Private patients will be charged a reasonable fee dependent on the area requested by your doctor to be scanned. All potential fees associated with a referred exam will be discussed with you prior to confirming a booking. If you are registered with Medicare they will reimburse a percentage of the fee.

Ultrasound scans which are bulk-billled (no cost) include:

* patients who hold a valid pension or concession card

*Can I use my private health insurance?*

Generally speaking, private medical imaging procedures are only covered if you are an inpatient in a private hospital. Please check with your private health provider, as different policies offer different levels of cover.

*Can I bring a relative or friend to my ultrasound appointment?*

We encourage partners to be present for obstetric (pregnancy) scans, however for all other ultrasound scans it is preferred that your friends and relatives remain in our waiting room. This allows the sonographer to give their full attention to the patient being scanned.

*What if I don’t want to know the gender of my baby?*

The sonographer performing your scan is highly trained in the interpretation of the ultrasound images, and so it is unlikely you will be able to tell the gender of your child just by seeing the images on the screen. Sometimes the position of the baby also makes it very difficult to see genital organs even for even the sonographer.

*What happens to my results?*

Your ultrasound scan is reviewed by our radiologist who is the specialist doctor onsite at Radius. A report is made based on any findings and sent to your doctor within 24-48 hours. Urgent ultrasound scans may be able to be reviewed at the time of your appointment.