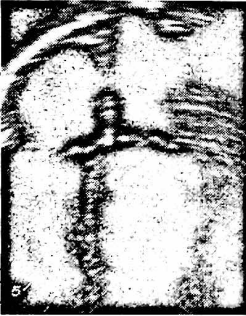


What is Ultrasound?

Ultrasound is a simple, safe, and painless diagnostic procedure that uses high frequency sound waves to capture images of the body. Ultrasound allows physicians to look at the actual structures of your heart, veins, and arteries, as well as see the blood moving through them. During the exam, the technologist will apply a gel to the area of your body under examination and then take a picture by placing a small probe on your skin. Ultrasound tests have been used in medicine for over twenty years, have no known side effects, and cause no pain. The only thing you will feel during the exam is the pressure of the probe the technologist will apply to the area to be imaged.

What is an Echocardiogram?

An Echocardiogram is a common type of ultrasound examination which allows physicians to view your heart. This examination will allow the physicians to evaluate the blood flow, structure and function of your heart. During the test, a technologist will image your heart using a probe placed on your chest while you are lying on your side.



There is usually no discomfort associated with this test; all you should feel is the pressure of the probe as it is moved from image to image on your chest. There is no special preparation for this test; however we recommend you wear a shirt or blouse which is easily removable for your convenience. No medications are given to you during this test so you will be able to drive yourself home after the test is finished.

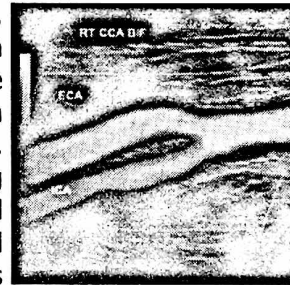
Please arrive 15 minutes before your appointment time and allow approximately one hour for the test. Your test may need to be rescheduled if you arrive late.

What is a Carotid Ultrasound?

A Carotid ultrasound is a test that shows the carotid arteries (arteries in the neck that provide blood flow to the brain) as well as how much blood is flowing and how fast it travels through them. Ultrasound waves are used to make an image of the arteries and the actual blood flow through the arteries. Narrowing of the carotid arteries caused by cholesterol deposits and blood clots can be detected using this procedure. These conditions can cause problems with the blood flow to the brain and lead to stroke.

You will be asked to lie down on an examination table. The technologist will place a clear gel on the area of the neck where the carotid artery is located. The gel allows the probe to transmit the ultrasound waves without interference from air. When the probe is placed against the skin, an image of the artery is shown on a video screen. To view the arteries from many different angles, the technologist will reposition the probe several times. Because blood is flowing through the artery, a sound similar to your heartbeat will be heard. The procedure is repeated for the carotid artery on the other side of your neck. There is no special preparation for this test. No medications are given to you during the test so you will be able to drive yourself home after the test is finished.

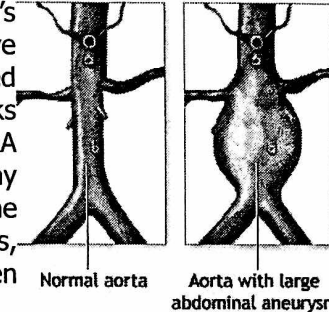
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What is an Abdominal Aortic Ultrasound?

An ultrasound of the abdominal aorta is a non invasive, painless test that uses high frequency sound waves to image the aorta, the main blood vessel leading away from the heart and the largest artery in your body. When the walls of the abdominal aorta become weak, they may balloon outward. Normally, your aorta is approximately 2 centimeters in diameter. If the aorta reaches over 3 centimeters in diameter, it is then called an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA). Conditions that may contribute to the development of a AAA are: High blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, a history of heart disease, and family history.

As the aneurysm size increases, the risk of rupture increases. There are no symptoms of AAA until it breaks, this is why it's very important to have this test performed if your doctor thinks you're at risk. If the AAA does rupture, you may experience pain in the back or belly, weakness, fainting or even sudden death.



The quality of your ultrasound test can be affected by food in the intestines as well as bowel gas. **Therefore, it is important that you do not eat at least eight hours before the test.** GasX is an over the counter medication that can be obtained without a prescription. GasX tablets taken before the test will also improve the quality of the exam by eliminating bowel gas. Before taking this medication, consult your physician. You may be taking medications that could interact with GasX.

Please arrive 15 minutes before your appointment and allow approximately one hour for the test. Your test may need to be rescheduled if you arrive late.