

Head scan - routine

Parent information

A head scan is also called a cranial ultrasound. It is a routine scan done in the nursery while the baby is lying in their cot. A technician places a small amount of clear gel on the baby's head and uses the ultrasound machine's small wand (transducer) to produce images of the brain. This scan is like the one that most mothers have during pregnancy. The scan is mainly used to look for bleeds in the brain which can occur in preterm babies.

Which babies have routine head scans?

- Babies born less than 32 weeks
- Babies born less than 1500 grams
- Other babies may have head scans however these are not routine and only done when needed.

When are the routine head scans performed?

- Day 3
- Day 10
- 4 - 6 weeks
- At times, some babies may need to have these scans done more often.

Is the procedure painful, are there risks?

No, it is painless, and most babies sleep through the scan. There are no known harmful effects of the ultrasound scans.

When will the results be available?

The scan images are usually available in the nursery on the same day as the scan. The official report may take a few days. The medical staff will discuss any unusual findings with you.

Any further questions?

This fact sheet provides general information.

If you have any questions about your baby's care, we encourage you to speak to the nursing and medical staff.



Consumers contributed
to this information.