

Ottawa Regional
WOMEN'S BREAST HEALTH CENTRE



"A Partner in Breast Health"

Ultrasound



THE OTTAWA HOSPITAL – CIVIC CAMPUS
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An Ontario Breast Screening Program Affiliate

What is Ultrasound?

Diagnostic ultrasound is a special imaging procedure using high frequency sound waves rather than x-rays to create pictures. The sound wave frequency used is too high to be felt or heard.

Ultrasound of the breast is used primarily for problem solving, i.e. to image a lump which is present on a mammogram. It may help determine whether this lump is cystic or solid. It is not reliable as a screening modality.

Ultrasound is also used to guide core needle biopsies of solid lumps and fine needle aspirations of cysts.

Do I need to follow any special instructions to be ready for an ultrasound examination?

If you have had a recent mammogram somewhere other than at The Ottawa Hospital–Civic Campus, please bring the x-rays with you when you come for your appointment.

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible at 761-4808.

Who will perform the procedure?

Your ultrasound examination will be performed by a technologist who has had special training in ultrasound under

the supervision of a radiologist (a specialist medical doctor). The ultrasound images will be reviewed by a radiologist who will issue a final report.

What happens to me during the procedure?

Prior to the ultrasound examination, you will be asked to undress to the waist and put on a hospital gown. While you are waiting to be taken into the Ultrasound Room, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire regarding your medical history. This information is very important for the radiologist.

The procedure will be performed in a darkened room. Once in the room, you will be asked to lie on a narrow table, and the technologist will then explain the procedure to you and ask you pertinent medical questions. A warm, water soluble gel which aids in the transmission of sound waves will be spread over the area to be examined. A small instrument called a “probe” or “transducer” will be placed in contact with the skin over the area of interest and moved slowly across that area. It may be necessary for the technologist to apply mild pressure with the probe on the area being examined, but this should not cause any discomfort.

A computer will convert the returning sound waves into images on a television

monitor and a series of pictures will be taken and stored in another computer. The stored images will be checked by a radiologist and he or she may come into the Ultrasound Room during the examination.

The procedure routinely takes approximately 15–20 minutes.

Should I expect any after effects as a result of the procedure?

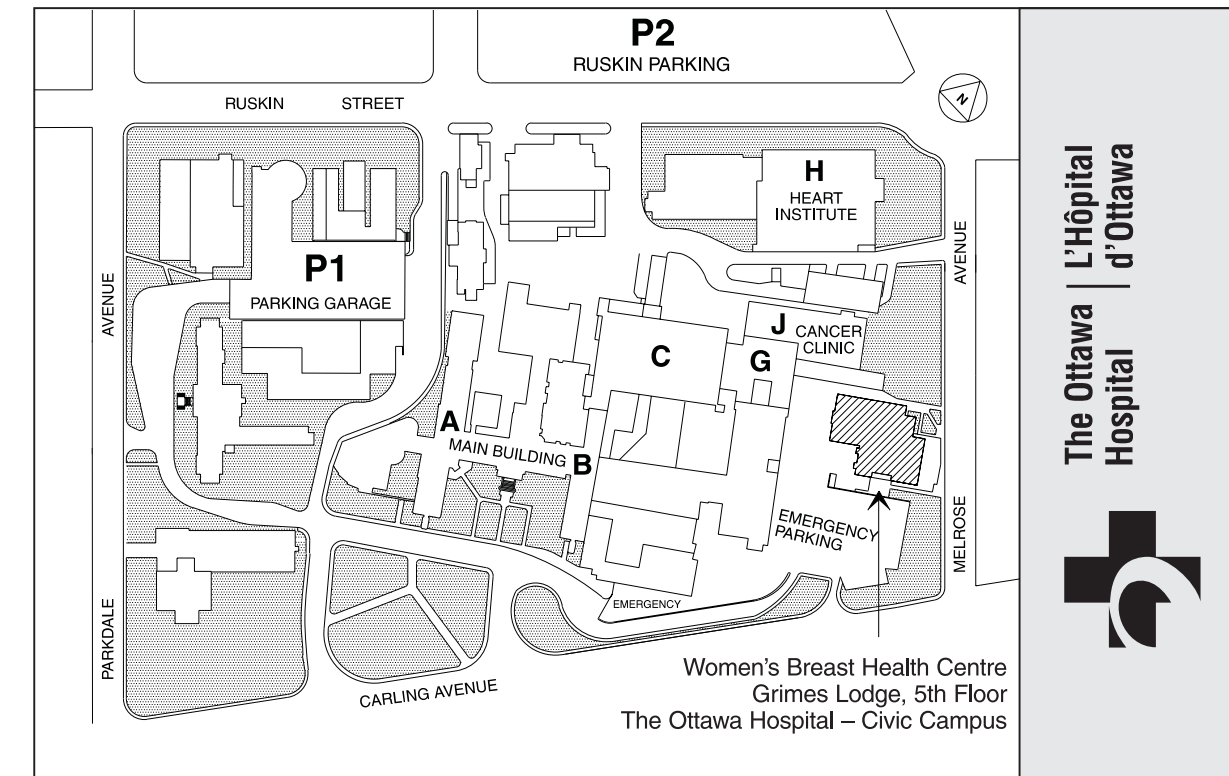
There are no known side effects from an ultrasound examination.

When and how will I know the results?

Your doctor will receive a written report from the radiologist within 7 days. You should obtain the results from your own doctor. If there is any urgency, your doctor is more than welcome to contact us by telephone.



If you have other questions or concerns that have not been answered here, please feel free to ask our staff.



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