

Your Anomaly / Mid-pregnancy Scan

This leaflet explains about having an anomaly / mid-pregnancy scan. If you have any further questions, please speak to your GP or the midwife caring for you.

What is an anomaly / mid-pregnancy scan?

This scan is a detailed examination which checks for possible physical and structural problems in your baby. It is usually carried out 21 to 22 weeks into your pregnancy and is performed by an experienced sonographer.

At St George's, the timing of this scan is a little later than some other hospitals. This is based on evidence from research, which indicates that later scans see improvement in:

- screening for pre-eclampsia
- screening your baby's heart
- imaging, meaning that it is less likely that you will need to be recalled to complete your scan.

As the baby is more developed, you should be able to see the baby more clearly. In the unlikely event that you need to be referred to one of our doctors for a second opinion, this can be done effectively and quickly.

The scan is offered to all pregnant women but some may choose not to have it. If you decide that you do not want to have the scan, this choice will be respected and your care will not be affected in any way.

It is important to remember that the scan cannot pick up all problems.

How is the scan performed?

As with the first trimester scan, the anomaly / mid-pregnancy scan is performed through your abdomen using an ultrasound probe.

How long does it take?

It usually takes about 20 minutes to perform an anomaly scan. In some cases, depending on the position of your baby and the views, it can take up to 40 minutes.

Can I bring my family with me for the scan?

Yes, but we do ask you to limit the number of persons accompanying you to one person only. **Children are not permitted except if childcare cannot be arranged.**

This is because the scan requires a lot of concentration and having more people in the room can be quite distracting for the sonographer.

As St George's is a teaching hospital, there may be trainee sonographers or students observing your scan. If you would prefer not to have students in the room, please let us know and we will respect your wishes.

Will I need to come back for any further scans?

No. Usually, no further scans are necessary to complete the anomaly scan. In some instances (where the scan pictures are not clear), further scans may be arranged. This is usually either because the baby is lying in a position that does not permit a full examination or because your weight or abdomen structure does not allow for a satisfactory examination.

A routine growth scan will be arranged at 36 to 37 weeks. The sonographer will explain this to you and make the appropriate appointments.

What will happen if a problem is found or suspected during the scan?

Most babies are normal but occasionally, the sonographer may see or suspect a problem with your baby. If this happens, the sonographer will explain any concerns to you and will arrange an appointment for you to be seen by one of the specialist doctors.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Q. Can I get a picture of my anomaly scan?

A. We are happy to provide photos of your baby. There is a small charge for this – please enquire at the reception desk before your scan. DVDs are not possible for this scan.

Q. Can my baby hear or feel the ultrasound or probe?

A. As far as we know, the baby is unaware that the scan is taking place.

Q. Is the scan dangerous to the pregnancy?

A. Scanning is not thought to be harmful to you or your baby.

Q. Can you tell the sex of the baby at this stage?

A. The sonographer will be able to let you know the sex of your baby if you would like to know. However, occasionally the baby may be in a position that prevents us from detecting whether it is a boy or a girl. If this is the case then **no** further scans will be arranged to find out the sex of the baby.

Q. Can you tell how big my baby will be at delivery?

A. No, because all babies are different and we have no way of knowing how fast your baby will grow. Antenatal checks with your midwife will ensure that the growth and size of your baby is monitored.

Q. Why isn't the picture as clear as my friend's?

A. We will always conduct a thorough examination of your baby but sometimes it is not possible to get pictures that parents will appreciate or understand.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to ask your sonographer at the time of the scan.

Research at St George's

St George's is a university hospital and you may be asked to take part in one of several research projects. Your sonographer or midwife will explain this to you in more detail if you are invited to join a study.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your anomaly scan, please do not hesitate to contact the fetal medicine unit (4th floor, Lanesborough Wing) on **020 8725 0857**.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health. **Web:** www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. **Tel:** 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

