

Uterine artery Doppler ultrasound

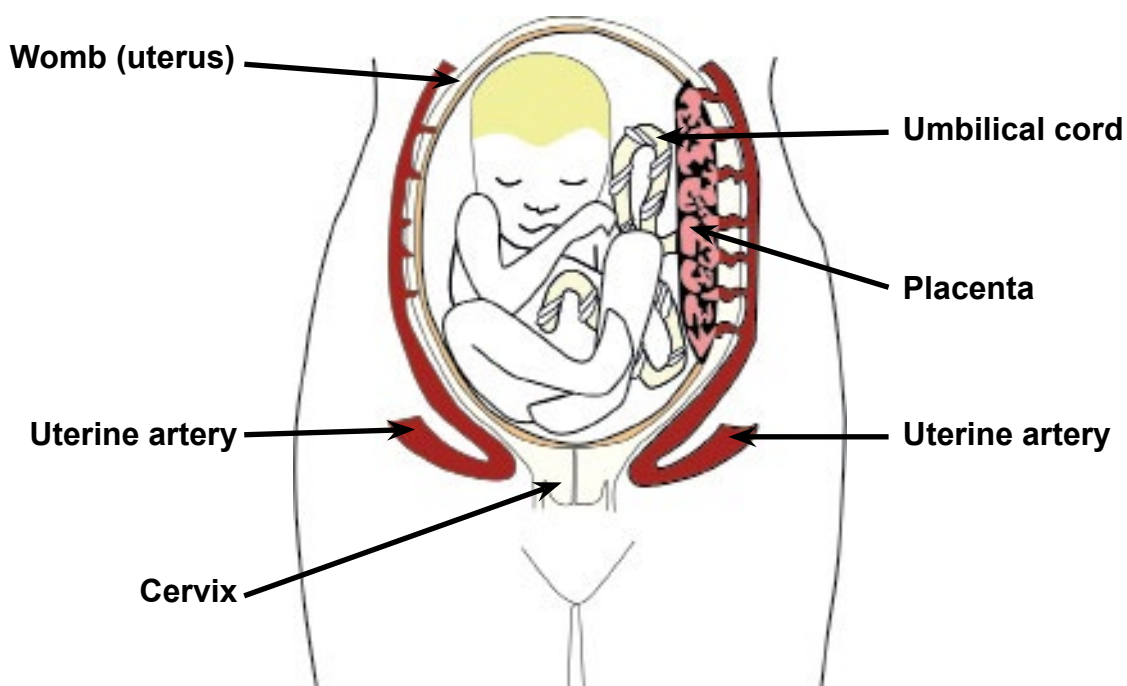
Information for women and their families

You have been offered a uterine artery Doppler ultrasound scan by your midwife or obstetrician, as you have additional medical or previous pregnancy risk factors that put you at increased risk of early onset fetal growth restriction.

This leaflet explains what the scan is and what will happen when you arrive at the hospital for your appointment. If after reading this leaflet you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to your midwife.

What is a uterine artery?

Uterine arteries carry blood to your womb (uterus). Every woman has two uterine arteries on either side of their womb. These arteries supply the blood flow to the womb, which then feed the placenta. If there is a good blood flow in these arteries the placenta is more likely to develop normally, helping the baby to grow in a healthy way inside the womb.



What is a uterine artery Doppler ultrasound measurement?

A Doppler ultrasound measurement is used to check the blood flow in your uterine arteries. It is a simple ultrasound scan (similar to the ultrasound scan you had at 20 weeks). The Doppler measurement uses sound waves to check if your blood is flowing easily (low resistance) or whether your blood is not flowing as smoothly (raised resistance).

What happens during my scan?

Please refer to your appointment letter for details of your scan.

You will be taken into a room in the Maternity Department by a member of staff. They will explain what is going to happen during your scan. Use this time to ask questions or raise any concerns you may have. Remember you can withdraw your consent for screening at any time.

You will be asked to lay on a couch and expose your abdomen (stomach). A sonographer or trained obstetrician will place a small blob of jelly on your abdomen and move the ultrasound probe over your abdomen (stomach).

How long will the procedure take?

The scan can take up to 45 minutes. You can leave the hospital straight after your scan.

Are there any risks to having this procedure?

No, there are no risks to having this scan.

When will I get my results?

The sonographer will let you know your results after your scan.

What do the results mean?

- A **low resistance flow** means that a good, steady amount of blood is reaching your womb, helping your baby to continue to grow well. A normal result also shows that you are less likely to develop pre-eclampsia. You will be offered growth scans every three to four weeks from 32 weeks in your pregnancy, to monitor your babies growth.
- Sometimes the measurement will show a **raised resistance**. This suggests there is an increased chance of your baby not growing as well as expected, or an increased risk of you developing pre-eclampsia. It is important to understand that this does not mean that this will happen, only that you are at increased risk. If the measurement shows a raised resistance or positive screen, then you will be offered further monitoring, scans, and hospital and midwife appointments during your pregnancy. That means that if problems do arise they can be found as early as possible.

What will be done if the Doppler measurement shows raised resistance?

If your measurements show a raised resistance we will offer you additional monitoring, scans, and hospital or midwife appointments during your pregnancy. This means that if problems do arise they can be found as early as possible.

Is there anything I can do to help my baby to grow well?

If you smoke, it is extremely important that you stop. Smoking can seriously affect how your placenta works and your baby's growth. Please ask your midwife to refer you to our stop smoking service, or you can contact them on 07815 70 57 37 or you can call One You Kent on 0300 1 23 12 20.

Monitoring your baby's movements is a good way for you to check your baby's wellbeing.

Who can I speak with if I need further information?

Being asked to have further screenings may cause you anxiety, but please be assured that most babies will grow normally. Please contact one of the Maternity Daycare Units to speak to the midwives if you have any queries or concerns.

- **Maternity Daycare**
Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, Margate
Telephone: 01843 23 44 83
- **Maternity Daycare**
William Harvey Hospital, Ashford
Telephone: 01233 61 66 38

This leaflet has been produced with and for women and their families

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation