

Upper Abdominal Ultrasound

*Do not eat or
drink anything
after midnight
the night before
the exam.*

An ultrasound (sonogram) test uses sound waves to project an image. This allows the doctor to view organs and areas within the body. A small, hand-held device (transducer) is placed on the skin over the area to be examined. The sound waves from the transducer are reflected off the internal organs back to the transducer and they create an image on a video screen. The images are seen and captured in real time, showing movement.

The upper abdominal ultrasound is done most often to examine the:

- Liver.
- Gallbladder.
- Pancreas.
- Spleen.

The exam, done in the Ultrasound department, takes about 45 minutes.

Before the Test

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before the exam. This includes gum or candy. You may take needed medicines with only small sips of water. For best results, this test should be done in the morning.

On the day of the exam, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test.
- A list of allergies.
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter, and herbals).
- Medical insurance information.
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only).

Please come to the Galter Pavilion, 201 E. Huron St., and check in at the reception desk on the 4th floor.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions; 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior entrance).

A sonography technologist (tech) will escort you to the exam room. Then, you will change into a hospital gown (underwear may be left on).

During the Test

You will be assisted onto an exam table. While lying on your back, a warm clear gel is applied to the abdomen. The tech then slowly moves the transducer over that area, using light pressure. The transducer transmits sound waves to a monitor, where the images can be seen and saved for later review.

During the exam, you may be asked to:

- Take in a deep breath and hold it.
- Turn onto each side, so that certain images can be obtained.

Before the exam is complete, the radiologist reviews the images. If needed, portions of the exam may be repeated.

After the Test

After the exam, the tech provides towels to help remove the gel.

You may resume your normal diet and activities. The results are sent to your doctor within 5 working days.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.

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Developed by: Ultrasound Department

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For more information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit www.nmh.org.

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