

# **MATERNAL-FETAL MEDICINE**

## **Community Health Network**

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### **Consent for Obstetrical Ultrasound**

Your physician has requested that you have an ultrasound examination of your pregnancy. This information sheet will answer several important questions about this diagnostic procedure.

#### **What is Ultrasound and what can it show about my pregnancy?**

Ultrasound uses the same principle as sonar. Sound waves from the ultrasound probe (far beyond the range of hearing) bounce off your uterus and your developing baby producing echoes which a computer converts into detailed images.

#### **Is Ultrasound safe?**

There has been extensive evaluation for the safety of ultrasound over the course of 15 years. There is no evidence that diagnostic ultrasound causes harm to either the mother or the fetus.

#### **Types of Exams**

A basic or standard ultrasound provides information concerning placental location, fetal position, multiple gestations (e.g. twin pregnancy), gestational age and the possible presence of fetal malformations.

A complete or extensive ultrasound is a more detailed exam providing not only the information of a basic study, but in addition, more specific evaluation for fetal growth and/or fetal abnormalities.

A vaginal ultrasound, (in which a special ultrasound instrument about the thickness of a tampon is inserted into the vagina), is occasionally used to provide detailed views of the uterus or portions of the fetus that are low in the pelvis. This may be used to see the heartbeat, the location of a very early pregnancy or to evaluate the placenta or cervix. As with other ultrasound exams, the procedure is safe and generally of little discomfort.

#### **Does a normal ultrasound prove that my baby will have no abnormalities?**

While a basic ultrasound will detect many abnormalities, it is not definitive for fetal malformations. Despite a normal interpretation of the test, some babies may be born with abnormalities not identified by the examiner during the study.

You should realize that even with a complete ultrasound, the examiner might still be unable to find fetal abnormalities that are later discovered after birth. Thus, although ultrasound is a very helpful diagnostic tool, it should not be considered as absolute proof of the absence of fetal defects.

#### **Consent**

Should you have any questions concerning ultrasound, do not hesitate to discuss them with your doctor or the ultrasound technologist before undergoing the procedure. You are requested to sign this document prior to the performance of you ultrasound examination and to thereby acknowledge that you have read and understood the information contained herein, and have given informed consent to this procedure.

X \_\_\_\_\_  
**Patient Name (please print)**

X \_\_\_\_\_  
**Patient/Gaurdian Signature**

X \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**