

## About aorta ultrasound scanning

### Why is it important to scan the aorta?

The aorta comes directly from the heart and is the largest artery of the body. It has many branches and is important for supplying blood to the legs and organs in the abdomen.

The most common disease of the aorta is its enlargement (aneurysmal disease). An aneurysm occurs when the wall of the artery becomes weak and swells like a balloon. Aneurysms often do not cause any symptoms, so it is important to scan them to detect problems early.

### Where do I go for my scan?

Vascular studies, 6th floor - entrance next to 6 west A ward

### Who will I see?

You will be seen by a member of the clinical vascular scientist team, who will perform and interpret your ultrasound scan.

### How do I prepare for the test?

You should starve for four hours before the scan. This will help to remove any excess bowel gas that may otherwise restrict the scientist's views.

Please take any medication as normal. People with diabetes should eat normally. Please avoid drinking fizzy or milky drinks.

You will be asked to remove some of your clothing in order to expose your abdomen (stomach) for the scientist to perform the scan.

### What does the test involve?

You lie on the couch; some cold gel is applied to your abdomen and the scientist scans the area of interest using ultrasound to image the aorta.

The test takes about 20-30 minutes. There are no risks or side-effects associated with this test.

### What happens next?

The clinical vascular scientist writes a report of the scan result and informs the doctor who requested the scan. The clinical scientist can comment on the findings. You will be able to discuss the results more fully with the doctor at your next out-patient appointment.

### Do you have any further questions?

Do not hesitate to contact vascular studies 020 7830 2862 and speak to one of our clinical vascular scientists.

**If you would like this information in an alternative format, please ask a member of staff.**

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