

## Second trimester scan information

This document has been designed to assist you in making the best choice for you and your baby. You will find, here below, the reasons why such a test is available to you during your pregnancy, the information that your doctors and midwives can draw from them, their benefits and disadvantages. Please, also note, that ultrasound examination is available to all pregnant women, on a voluntary basis. The scans are partially reimbursed by the French social security.

### What is a scan?

It consists of an ultrasound investigation of your body which, based on today's knowledge, does not cause negative effects or damage to the unborn child. This also applies to repeated investigations.

### How is the exam carried out ?

It is better to have an empty bladder. To conduct the examination, a hand held device is moved across the tummy. The device is covered with a lubricating jelly beforehand to make it slide more easily and to facilitate the transmission of the acoustic waves. In special circumstances, it is necessary to introduce a probe into the vagina to get closer to the foetal structures. This process is not dangerous or painful. For this particular investigation method, the probe is protected by a steril "single use" cover. The cover is usually made of Latex. **So if you happen to be allergic to Latex, please notify the medical assistant as well as your physician.** Some incidents or accidents may occur and alternative materials can and will be used.

Several body positions can be selected to conduct the exam (lying on the side or flat on the back with closed fists under your cheek....a cushion may also be used)

These investigations require a lot of concentration and attention from the doctor or midwife, so it is very important to maintain a quiet environment while conducting them. We therefore strongly recommend that you undertake the scan either alone or with only one other adult. Small children or too many people could divert and disturb your doctor and affect the quality of the exam

After completion of the scan you will have the opportunity to ask all the questions you wish and you will be provided with a detailed summary of the findings together with the relevant pictures. To ensure proper communication, another copy of the complete scan report will be given to you for your physician.

**When ?** The second trimester scan should best take place between 22 and 23 weeks

**What is its purpose ?** There are 4 main reasons to conduct the second trimester scan

- **To assess the vitality of the foetus** (heart beats and active movements)
- **To assess foetal growth**
- **To analyse the foetus aspect and his internal organs.** Many malformations are detectable and the enhancement of the equipment continuously increases the effectiveness of the scanning process. All medical checks, even conducted with high competency, have their limits, especially under unusual conditions such as : an abdominal wall that is too thick, the foetus in a difficult position or an inappropriate timing for the scan leading to an inaccurate interpretation of the measurements. Some malformations will just not be seen. Ultrasound will detect about 2 malformations out of 3. If an anomaly is suspected, you will be offered additional scans to confirm or not the initial observation. In some cases, the anomaly will not be confirmed or will be minor and could disappear over time (weeks). In the contrary where the diagnosis is confirmed, the medical team will provide you with all the necessary explanations and define the best next steps.
- **To assess foetal environment:** quantity of amniotic fluid, position of the placenta.

3D ultrasound is not a part of routine scanning. Like 2D, it does not, based on today's knowledge, cause negative effects and damage to the unborn child. It is useful for diagnostics in certain circumstances as an addition to 2D scanning. Depending on the position of the foetus, the doctor or the midwife can show you the face of your baby in 3D.