



GP guide for the imaging of female patients with abdominal and pelvic symptoms

Ultrasound is a first-choice investigation for a range of clinical conditions, including:

- Endometriosis
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome
- Gynaecological cancer
- Fibroids

Wherever possible the GP should examine the patient before referring for a scan.

Please note that in patients with BMI > 40 ultrasound may not produce satisfactory images, however it can be considered if no other investigation is available.

How do I refer a patient?

Complete an ultrasound referral form which you can download from our website www.inhealthgroup.com or request via email to info@inhealthgroup.com. Please specify the presenting complaint and relevant past medical history, and indicate which area is to be investigated on the form.

Requests for imaging should take into account its appropriateness for the clinical condition, the potential health benefit and the suitability of the patient for the investigation.

Please return the completed form by fax to **0844 581 0305** or by secure email to INL.inhealthreferrals@nhs.net. Once we have received the referral form we will contact your patient to book a suitable appointment time.

Referral Guidelines

Presenting Complaint	Imaging Guidance
Palpable abdominal or pelvic mass	<p>Any woman with a palpable abdominal or pelvic mass should have an ultrasound scan.</p> <p>Transabdominal and transvaginal ultrasound is always available if necessary.</p> <p>MRI is the best second-line investigation, and will be recommended if necessary.</p> <p>If the scan is suggestive of cancer, an urgent referral will be recommended.</p>
Abdominal pain or distention	<p>In women > 45 years with persistent abdominal pain or distention, ovarian cancer should be considered and a pelvic ultrasound requested.</p>
Suspected endometriosis or pelvic inflammatory disease	<p>Ultrasound is a helpful investigation.</p>
Dysmenorrhoea/ amenorrhoea	<p>Ultrasound is a helpful investigation.</p>
Lost intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD)	<p>Transvaginal ultrasound is recommended to locate this device.</p>
Symptoms of polycystic ovarian syndrome	<p>Ultrasound is a helpful investigation.</p>
Post menopausal bleeding	<p>Transvaginal ultrasound is indicated to exclude significant endometrial pathology in postmenopausal bleeding.</p> <p>A gynaecological referral will be recommended for endometrial thickening > 5mm in postmenopausal women.</p>

References

Nice Clinical Guideline 11 – Fertility: assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems. National Collaborating Centre for Women’s and Children’s Health, 2004

NICE Clinical Guideline 27 – Referral guidelines for suspected cancer. National Collaborating Centre for Primary Care, 2005

Referral Guidelines – Making the best use of clinical radiology services. Royal College of Radiologists, 6th Edition, 2007

Framework for Primary Care Access to Imaging – Right Test, Right Time, Right Place. Royal College of Radiologists and Royal College of General Practitioners, 2006

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