

# 20 weeks pregnant anatomy scan

**20 weeks pregnant anatomy scan** is a crucial milestone in pregnancy, offering an in-depth look at the developing fetus and assessing its health and growth. This scan, often referred to as the mid-pregnancy scan or anomaly scan, typically occurs between 18 to 22 weeks of gestation. It provides expectant parents with valuable information, including the baby's anatomy, potential birth defects, and even the determination of the baby's sex, should they wish to know. Understanding the significance of this scan, what to expect during the procedure, and the implications of the results is essential for every expecting parent. This article delves into the anatomy scan at 20 weeks, discussing its purpose, the procedure, key findings, and the importance of this examination in prenatal care.

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## What is the Purpose of the 20 Weeks Pregnant Anatomy Scan?

The primary purpose of the 20 weeks pregnant anatomy scan is to provide a detailed assessment of the baby's development. This scan examines the fetus's anatomy to ensure that all organs are developing normally and to check for any visible abnormalities. The anatomy scan is also an opportunity to measure the baby's growth and check the amniotic fluid levels, as well as the position of the placenta.

In addition to assessing fetal health, this scan serves several other critical purposes:

- **Screening for Birth Defects:** The anatomy scan can identify potential birth defects, including heart defects, spinal cord issues, and other structural abnormalities.
- **Gender Determination:** Many parents choose to find out their baby's sex during this scan, although it is not the primary purpose.
- **Monitoring Growth:** The scan allows healthcare providers to measure the baby's growth and

ensure it is developing within the expected range for gestational age.

- **Assessing Placental Health:** The scan checks the position and health of the placenta, which is crucial for the baby's nourishment and overall well-being.

## What to Expect During the Anatomy Scan?

When you arrive for your anatomy scan, you can expect a procedure that typically lasts between 30 to 60 minutes. It is performed by a trained sonographer or healthcare provider who specializes in ultrasound imaging. Here is a brief overview of what to anticipate during the scan:

### The Procedure

Upon entering the examination room, you will be asked to lie down on an examination table. A gel will be applied to your abdomen, which helps the ultrasound transducer make better contact with your skin. The sonographer will then move the transducer over your abdomen to capture images of your fetus.

Throughout the scan, the sonographer will take various measurements and images of the baby, focusing on different body parts like the head, spine, heart, kidneys, and limbs. This process may involve some pressure as the sonographer needs to obtain clear images. If the baby is in an unfavorable position, you may be asked to shift positions or walk around to encourage movement.

### Viewing the Images

During the scan, you may be able to see images of your baby on a monitor. Many parents find this experience incredibly exciting as they get a glimpse of their developing child. The sonographer may also provide you with images to take home.

## Key Findings of the 20 Weeks Anatomy Scan

The anatomy scan provides detailed information about the baby's development and can reveal important findings, including:

- **Fetal Measurements:** These include measurements of the head, abdomen, and femur to assess growth and development.
- **Organ Development:** The scan checks that all major organs, such as the heart, brain, and

kidneys, are developing correctly.

- **Amniotic Fluid Levels:** Adequate amniotic fluid is necessary for fetal health, and the scan can assess these levels.
- **Placental Position:** The position of the placenta is evaluated to ensure it is not covering the cervix, which can lead to complications.

These findings help healthcare providers determine if the pregnancy is progressing normally and if any further action is needed.

## Potential Concerns Identified During the Scan

While the anatomy scan is primarily a positive experience, it can occasionally reveal concerns that may require further evaluation. Some of the potential issues that can be identified include:

- **Structural Anomalies:** The scan may reveal congenital anomalies that could affect the baby's health.
- **Growth Restrictions:** If the baby is not growing at the expected rate, further assessments may be necessary.
- **Placental Issues:** Conditions like placenta previa or placental abruption can be detected during the scan.

If any concerns arise, your healthcare provider will discuss the findings with you and outline potential next steps, which may include additional ultrasounds or consultations with specialists.

## Preparing for Your Anatomy Scan