

## Hibiscus Women's Care

# Ultrasound - Informed Consent

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This informed consent applies specifically to obstetric patients of Hibiscus Women's Care who are undergoing pregnancy ultrasound studies. Patients who are not cared for by Hibiscus Women's Care should discuss the benefits and limitations of ultrasound with their own obstetric providers.

### Survey Ultrasound and Transvaginal Cervical Length

Your physician or certified nurse midwife has recommended a "survey ultrasound" and a "transvaginal cervical length" to screen for fetal anatomic defects, placental problems, and elevated risk for preterm delivery. It is important that you understand the limitations and possible costs of these tests before they are done.

The survey ultrasound and transvaginal ultrasound are recommended at **19-20 weeks** to confirm the dating of the pregnancy, rule out multiple pregnancies, evaluate the amniotic fluid and placenta, and to measure the cervical length.

A careful assessment is made of the baby's anatomy, but this does NOT absolutely rule out birth defects or chromosomal problems, especially in patients who are overweight or obese.

Obesity has been shown to increase the rate of birth defects, AND it's more difficult to detect birth defects when patients are obese. Because of these factors, it is our office policy to offer a referral to a high-risk obstetrician (perinatologist) for these screening ultrasounds if a patient's Body Mass Index (BMI) is 40 or greater.

If pregnancy dating has been confirmed by an early ultrasound and the pregnancy is progressing normally, these screening ultrasounds are strongly recommended, but are not mandatory.

If the screening ultrasounds suggest a possible abnormality or shortened cervix, a follow-up ultrasound with a perinatologist is usually recommended.

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We will submit the proper forms to your insurance company, but cannot guarantee that the costs of the ultrasounds will be covered. If the charges are not covered by insurance, the patient will be responsible for any costs. Periodic ultrasounds are usually recommended for those with multiple pregnancy, or at risk for fetal growth problems or preterm labor.

Patients should check with their insurance carrier to confirm whether “**screening ultrasounds**” (diagnosis code for screening is “Z36”) are covered.

Ultrasounds for non-screening codes are usually covered, but may apply to deductibles.

Non-screening codes are used when there is a specific concern for a problem (for example, the size of the uterus seems too big or too small, or there is a complaint such as bleeding, or a risk for a condition because of prior history).

It is considered fraud to use a non-screening code for screening ultrasound.