



## Rehearsal Guide

# Ultrasound

*Preparing people with intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) to complete an ultrasound*

## Introduction for Caregivers

A rehearsal guide contains realistic pictures, concrete ideas, and clear, brief instructions for guiding a person through what can be expected in a specific situation. It includes helpful suggestions for caregivers to follow to make the experience meaningful for the person and increase the likelihood of a successful outcome. This approach is beneficial when supporting people with intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) who are anxious about situations such as doctors' appointments, hospitalizations, and medical testing.

A rehearsal guide provides opportunities for the caregiver to assist the person to learn about a specific situation. It contains information on what is needed and why and explains exactly what can be expected. Such a guide is most effective when it is person-centered and used in conjunction with discussion to allow exploration of specific areas of concern. It can be a powerful tool when used as intended.

The expected result is that the person will then experience the situation in a way that supports health and well-being by being prepared and knowing what to expect. The guide can be used at all stages of the situation to facilitate a positive end result.

Thank you for taking the time to use this tool to work with self-advocates to improve their health outcomes.

## How to Use This Rehearsal Guide


For best results, begin to review this rehearsal guide with the person prior to the day of the appointment. Sometimes it will help to review this material with an individual several days or weeks before an appointment; other times, it may be better to wait to review this material until just before the procedure is to take place, perhaps the day before or the morning of the procedure. Together with the individual, determine which will best suit the individual's needs and abilities in understanding the information provided; however, it is important not to wait until 5 minutes before a procedure to introduce this guide to an individual. Give the individual enough time in advance to become familiar with the procedure based on the pictures and information contained on each page and with the individual's abilities in mind.

It is best to review this guide slowly and to focus on one idea/page at a time, allowing the person to talk and/or ask questions after each idea/page is presented. A caregiver may want to share personal experiences related to having this procedure done but be sure to do so in a positive manner, depicting a positive outcome.

## For Best Practices

- ✓ Allot time to review this material when the individual is alert and interested in doing so.
- ✓ Ensure that the setting is free from distraction. Based on the individual's attention span, it may be best to review one page at a time, rather than reviewing an entire guide in one sitting.
- ✓ Explain each picture and practice the suggested exercises with the individual, such as deep breathing, as they appear throughout the guide.
- ✓ On the day of the procedure, take this guide along to continue rehearsing the various steps involved in the procedure. Review each page step by step.
- ✓ Remain positive, calm, and upbeat.
- ✓ Remember to offer positive reinforcement throughout the procedure. If the procedure is not able to be completed, focus on positive aspects. If the individual seems upset, talk about it later when they are calm to find out how they felt and what could be changed or improved to have a better outcome the next time.

# Preparing for the Ultrasound Test



MEDICAL CENTER

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Rx**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

LABEL  
REFILL 0 1 2 3 4 5 PRN NR

**Note to Caregiver:** Before the day of the test, read all instructions given to assist the individual in preparing for the ultrasound appropriately.

# Introducing the Process

*(Name of individual)*, you are going to have a special test called an ultrasound that will take pictures of the inside of your body on *(date of appointment)*.

The test will take place at *(name of location)*.

The doctor ordered this test for you to help keep you healthy.

*(Name of caregiver)* will go with you and stay with you while the people who work there get you ready for the test.



## In the Waiting Room

When you first get to your appointment, you will have to wait until someone calls your name to have the pictures of your body taken.

*(Name of caregiver)* will stay in the waiting room with you.

You might want to take a favorite book along to read, some of your favorite music to listen to on your headphones, or some other quiet activity to do while you wait.



# Changing Into a Patient Gown

The people who work at the place where you will have the ultrasound are friendly. They are there to help you and will tell you what you need to do.

These people may tell you to get undressed and put on a patient gown before the ultrasound begins. You can leave your clothing in the changing room.

It is okay to listen to these people. *(Name of caregiver)* will be there with you to make sure you are all right.



**Note to Caregiver:** You may want to reassure the individual that the dressing room is private. Be patient and speak in a low, reassuring tone while assisting the individual.

# The Ultrasound Machine

This is a picture of an ultrasound machine.



The person (technician) who will be taking the picture will help you lie down on the bed.

The ultrasound machine will be right next to the bed.

**Note to Caregiver:** Contact the testing facility for permission to stay with the person during the test for reassurance and to help position the person. If permitted, tell the person, "If you would like, (name of caregiver) will stay with you during the test."



# The Ultrasound



The technician will lift your gown, if needed, and squeeze a small amount of gel on your (*area of body to be scanned*). This gel helps the machine take better pictures.

This is a picture of a technician holding a transducer. It is the part of the ultrasound machine that helps take the pictures.



# The Ultrasound

The technician will gently press the transducer on your *(area of body to be scanned)* to take pictures.

You may feel pressure as the transducer is moved over your *(area of body to be scanned)*.

Sometimes the technician may need to press more firmly with the transducer. This helps take clearer pictures.



**Note to Caregiver:** *It may help the person understand the type of pressure to expect if you ball up your fist and gently press your knuckles against the area of the body that will be scanned.*

# Hold Your Breath

The technician may ask you to hold your breath for short times during the test. It is important for you not to move during those times.

While you are holding your breath, the technician will take the picture.

Let's practice holding our breath...



**Note to Caregiver:** Practice holding your breath with the individual. If you are in the room during the test, hold your breath with the person.

# The Ultrasound

During the test technician may need you to turn on your stomach or your side. The technician will help you change position if you need assistance.

The ultrasound may take 15 minutes or as long as 1 hour to complete. Everyone is different.

Relax. Try not to move during the test. The technician will tell you when it is okay for you to move.



# You Are Done!

After the ultrasound is completed, the technician will wipe off the gel that was put on your body.

The technician will help you off the bed.



Someone will take you back to the changing room where you left your clothes. You will take off the gown and get dressed in your own clothes again.

# You Can Do It!

I know you always do the best you can!



**Note to Caregiver:** Offer the individual praise and encouragement while reviewing this guide and throughout the day of the ultrasound.

## Resources

- Mayo Clinic. (2022, April 30). Ultrasound. Retrieved on August 05, 2022, from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/ultrasound/about/pac-20395177>
- University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Department of Radiology & Biomedical Imaging. (n.d.). Prepare for an Ultrasound (Sonography). Retrieved on August 05, 2022, from <https://radiology.ucsf.edu/patient-care/prepare/ultrasound>



For additional information regarding this guide or any of our physical or behavioral health trainings, contact:

**Kepro SW PA Health Care Quality Unit  
(Kepro HCQU)**