## My Booking Timeline

1. Discuss pregnancy testing options with my doctor
2. GP referral for blood tests and ultrasounds
3. Blood test 8-13.6 weeks (usually 10 weeks)
4. NT scan 11.5-13.5 weeks (usually 12-13 weeks)
5. Review results with my doctor

### Preparing for my scans

Please fill your bladder per the directions of our reception staff.

Bring in any prior scans you may have for this pregnancy.

### How is the NT Scan billed?

Most patients are entitled to a Medicare rebate but this may not cover the entire cost of your scan. Our reception staff will discuss this with you at the time of your booking.

**BUDERIM**
12-14 King Street,
Buderim QLD 4556

**MAROOCHYDORE**
60 Wises Road,
Maroochydore QLD 4558

**SCUPH**
3 Doherty Street,
Birtinya QLD 4575

**SELANGOR PRIVATE**
62 Netherton Street,
Nambour QLD 4560

**WARANA**
1 Main Drive,
Warana QLD 4575

**NAMBOUR**
Nambour Central, Main entry
via Ann St, Nambour QLD 4560

## Book an Appointment

1300 MY SCAN
1300 697 226

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scradiology.com.au

SUNSHINE COAST RADIOLOGY

Business Hours:
Monday to Friday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm

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SUNSHINE COAST RADIOLOGY

A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS

# Nuchal Translucency Scan

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## What is a Nuchal Translucency (NT) scan?

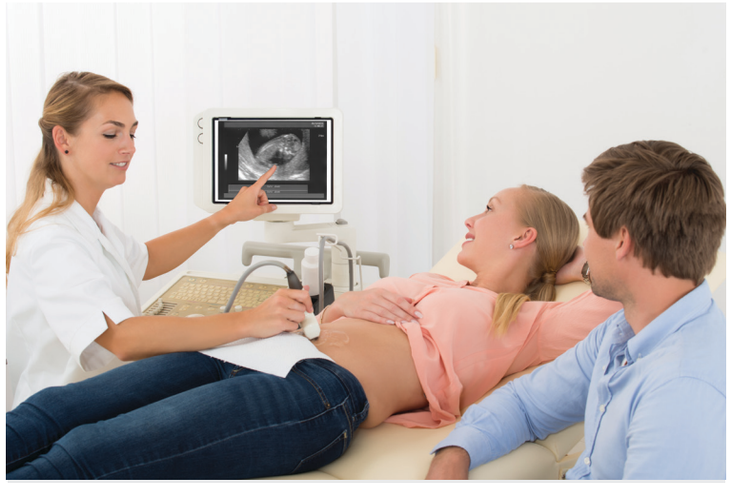
A Nuchal Translucency scan is an ultrasound used to help determine pregnancies that are at high risk of problems including Down Syndrome and other conditions.

The nuchal translucency (NT) is the fluid found at the back of the baby's head and neck, just under the skin, in the first trimester of pregnancy. In babies with chromosomal abnormalities, heart defects and some genetic syndromes, the NT thickness is often increased. We can precisely measure the nuchal translucency. We use this information combined with a specific blood test (free BhCG, PAPP-A) and relevant medical history to calculate the risk of your baby having trisomy 21, 18 or 13. We call this combined first trimester screening. Combined first trimester screening is a non-invasive way of assessing your risk, which means it does not involve putting needles into the placenta or amniotic sac, as happens with CVS and amniocentesis.

A high risk result does not necessarily mean there is anything abnormal but does suggest further tests are needed. Options will be explained to you in depth by your referring doctor who will receive the results of your scan.

The NT scan is also assessing other important information about your pregnancy. This includes an early review of the baby's structure and anatomy, confirming accurate dates, diagnosing twins, evaluating the placenta and identifying conditions in the mother such as uterine fibroids or ovarian abnormalities.

We can also use the blood tests from the NT scan to define your risks of an adverse outcome later in the pregnancy. For example, a low PAPP-A result is associated with conditions related to placental dysfunction including small babies later in the pregnancy.



## What does my NT Scan involve?

You will need to obtain two referrals from your doctor. You will need a referral for your blood test (free BhCG, PAPP-A) which is usually done after 10 weeks gestation, but can be done as early as 8-9 weeks (please ensure at least 2-3 business days between the blood test and your scan to ensure blood test results are ready at the time of your scan). This blood test is used in conjunction with your NT Ultrasound scan to calculate your risks. You will also need a referral for your NT scan. This scan can be performed between 11.5 weeks and 13.5 weeks, but is often best performed closer to 13 weeks to optimise assessment of the baby's structure.

The scan usually takes about 40 minutes and the results are sent to your referring doctor approximately 3-7 days after your scan, once entry of all relevant data has been approved.

Our friendly booking staff will give you instructions about preparing for your scan, including drinking water to fill your bladder. In most cases, we will only need to scan through your lower abdomen but sometimes an internal scan (transvaginal) is needed to see your baby in greater detail. Your sonographer will discuss the type of ultrasound needed to optimise your assessment.

## Who performs my scan?

There are strict and audited criteria for the accurate measurement of the NT and Sunshine Coast Radiology has fully accredited and FMF certified sonographers who perform this specialised ultrasound examination.

## What if I have already had Non-Invasive Prenatal Test (NIPT) - do I still need to have the NT Ultrasound and blood test?

NIPT is a very accurate screening blood test for the some chromosomal abnormalities such as trisomy 21, 18 and 13, but it does not detect all conditions that can affect your baby. It is recommended that NIPT be used in conjunction with nuchal translucency ultrasound. The nuchal translucency ultrasound assesses the structure/anatomy of your baby, meaning that you do not need to wait until 18- 20 week morphology ultrasound for an initial assessment of your baby's anatomy. Many anatomical abnormalities can be diagnosed in the first trimester with careful ultrasound, and may potentially alter the management of your pregnancy. This scan will also review the thickness of the nuchal translucency, for if the nuchal translucency measurement is more than 3.5mm, there is an increased risk of another chromosome abnormality in your baby, other than trisomy 21, trisomy 18 or trisomy 13. NIPT would then not be considered sufficient for the assessment of your baby and your doctor would discuss the option of prenatal diagnostic testing with CVS or amniocentesis for definitive (100%) diagnosis of all the baby's chromosomes.

First trimester serum screening is also still useful because it assesses the risks of your pregnancy developing complications related to the placenta, such as intrauterine growth restriction.