

Transcranial Doppler

What is it?

A transcranial Doppler is an ultrasound scan of the arteries located on the inside of the head. This scan is only for children with sickle cell disease.

Why have you been referred for this test?

A diagnosis of sickle cell disease has been made. In sickle cell disease the red blood cells become abnormally shaped and can get trapped inside small blood vessels. This causes them to become narrower and increases the risk of stroke.

A transcranial Doppler ultrasound looks for evidence of this narrowing and associated stroke risk.

What happens during the test?

The scan will be carried out in a scanning room. You will be asked to remove any clothing that prevents access to your temples. You will be asked to lay on a couch.

Ultrasound gel and an ultrasound probe will be placed on your temple. Both sides of your head will be scanned.

During the scan you will hear sounds coming from the machine that represent the blood flow through your arteries.

The scan takes 20-30 minutes. At the end of the scan the operator will inform you of the results and what will happen next.

If you are attending your appointment from home, you are usually free to go home after the scan.

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