Cervical Length Measurement

What is it?
A cervical length measurement is a vaginal ultrasound that measures the thickness of your cervix.

Why is it done?
The ultrasound checks your preterm delivery risk. Women who have a shortened cervix are at higher risk for delivering a premature baby.

When is it done?
The ultrasound is done between 18 and 24 weeks gestation when you have your scheduled ultrasound to check on your baby. The test may be done sooner if you have had a premature baby in the past.

How is the ultrasound done?
- You go to the bathroom to empty your bladder.
- You lie down on the exam table with your knees bent and your feet elevated in foot rests.
- A probe, called a transducer, with gel on it is placed in your vagina. Most women report this is painless, but you may feel some minor pressure from the probe.
- The probe sends sounds waves to the ultrasound machine to form a picture that measures the thickness of your cervix.
What do the results mean?

After your ultrasound is done, your healthcare provider will go over your results with you. If you are at an increased risk for premature delivery, your provider may recommend more ultrasounds and a medicine called progesterone.

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

We offer cervical length screenings to all pregnant women to decrease the risk of having a premature baby.

Is the ultrasound covered by my insurance?

If you have concerns about whether a vaginal ultrasound is covered by your medical insurance, check with your healthcare provider or your insurance company before your scheduled appointment. The diagnosis code for this ultrasound is ICD10-Z36, and its procedure code is 76817.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these signs of preterm labor:

- Contractions, with or without pain, 4 to 6 times per hour that do not disappear after one hour of drinking fluids and rest.
- Menstrual-like cramps in the lower abdomen or back that are constant or occur on and off.
- Any changes in vaginal discharge, especially if it becomes mucus-like, watery, or tinged with blood.
- Low dull backache.
- Pelvic pressure.
- A sense of “not feeling right”.

Talk to your health care provider or call Maternal Fetal Medicine at 614-293-2222 if you have any questions or concerns about cervical length measurement in pregnancy.

The Library for Health Information is available to help you find more health information at (614) 293-3707 or e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.