



CLEFTPALS VICTORIA

THE CLEFT PALATE & LIP SOCIETY

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ULTRASOUND DETECTION

Ultrasound scanning means clefts can be spotted

With **ADVANCES** in both ultrasound equipment and medical knowledge it is now possible for some clefts to be detected when mums-to-be have ultrasound scans.

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At present cleft lips with and without cleft palates have been picked up at several centres across the UK. A cleft palate in the absence of a cleft lip is not yet known to have been detected from a scan. Ultrasound scanning for the monitoring of a baby's development and detection of problems is usually carried out between 16 and 20 weeks of pregnancy. It is generally at this time that some clefts have been noticed, although occasionally clefts have been detected as early as 11 weeks. When a cleft is suspected antenatally further investigations may be necessary. Unfortunately, scanning for clefts is still not very reliable. Many parents will have been advised that the scan is normal and then give birth to a baby who has a cleft. The opposite situation has also occurred when the family is told that the baby

will have a cleft but the baby is born with lip and palate intact. Further progress needs to be made to improve the detail on scans and their interpretation. Changes also need to be made in handling situations when a cleft is diagnosed prenatally. There are occasions when parents have been told this news but given little information or support. They have then scoured libraries, listened to anecdotes and worried for months about their baby before meeting the cleft team and finding out what can be done to help. If you are expecting another baby and would like a detailed scan you can be referred to a Specialist Scanning Centre where a diagnosis about a cleft can be given with a relatively high degree of accuracy. Please discuss this with your GP, midwife and/or obstetrician.

What a scan looks like



The actual picture . . .

. . . and in simpler terms.



This article appeared in Issue 7 of *Clapa News*, 1994, the newsletter of the British Cleft Lip and Palate Association. We acknowledge their permission to reprint this article.

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