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# Obstetric Ultrasounds

## Adjudication Guideline

### Table of content

<b>Abstract</b> Page 1	<b>Scope</b> Page 2	<b>Adjudication Policy</b> Page 3	<b>Denial codes</b> Page 3	<b>Appendices</b> Page 4
---------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------------

### Abstract

#### For Members

Obstetric ultrasound is a safe, non-invasive, and accurate imaging method to evaluate the pregnant uterus and the fetus. It can aid in verifying that the pregnancy is progressing normally. It can also be used to detect, confirm and follow-up certain abnormalities.

Local (DOH/DHA) regulations and international best practice guidelines recommend OB ultrasound only when medically needed, not for determination of fetal sex or keepsake photos. Hence, an ultrasound may not be warranted at each and every consultation with the Obstetrician-gynecologist.

DOH and DHA standards mandate the use of obstetric ultrasounds as part of screening and care for all pregnant women. Daman will cover up to three per pregnancy, one per trimester. Additional ultrasounds needed for multiple gestations or other illnesses/conditions will be determined by the treating physician.

#### For Medical Professionals

Obstetric ultrasounds are covered for Basic, Enhanced and Thiqqa members with Maternity benefit, subject to policy terms and conditions.

Claims will be adjudicated in terms of specific medical necessity diagnosis/ diagnoses, frequency, clinician specialty, eligibility check/pre-authorization, and fulfilment of all documentation requirements in CPT coding criteria.

**Approved by:**  
Daman

**Responsible:**  
Medical Standards & Research

**Related Adjudication Guidelines:**  
Antenatal Care and Screening

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Doc Ctrl No.:	TEMP/350	Version No.:	1	Revision No.:	0	Date of Issue:	13.10.2016	Page No(s).:	1 of 5
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## Scope

Obstetric ultrasounds provide accurate and safe evaluation of the gravid uterus and growing fetus throughout a woman’s pregnancy. The purpose of this guideline is to clarify Daman’s policy on coverage of outpatient Obstetric Ultrasounds listed below for Basic, Enhanced and Thiqa members with Maternity benefit:

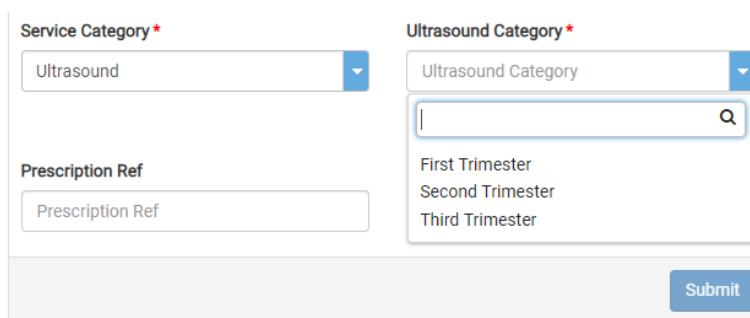
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation, first trimester (< 14 weeks 0 days), transabdominal approach; single or first gestation
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation, first trimester (< 14 weeks 0 days), transabdominal approach; each additional gestation (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation, after first trimester (> or = 14 weeks 0 days), transabdominal approach; single or first gestation
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation, after first trimester (> or = 14 weeks 0 days), transabdominal approach; each additional gestation (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation plus detailed fetal anatomic examination, transabdominal approach; single or first gestation
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation plus detailed fetal anatomic examination, transabdominal approach; each additional gestation (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, first trimester fetal nuchal translucency measurement, transabdominal or transvaginal approach; single or first gestation
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, first trimester fetal nuchal translucency measurement, transabdominal or transvaginal approach; each additional gestation (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, limited (e.g., fetal heartbeat, placental location, fetal position and/or qualitative amniotic fluid volume), one or more fetuses
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, follow-up (e.g., re-evaluation of fetal size by measuring standard growth parameters and amniotic fluid volume, re-evaluation of organ system(s) suspected or confirmed to be abnormal on a previous scan), transabdominal approach, per fetus
Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image documentation, transvaginal

Related investigations directly assessing fetal well-being (such as biophysical profile, Doppler velocimetry, echocardiography), as well as ultrasonic-guidance for amniocentesis or chorionic villus sampling, are outside the scope of this guideline.

## Adjudication Policy

### Eligibility / Coverage Criteria

1. All providers must obtain OpenJet eligibility prior to each obstetric ultrasound. Please refer to screenshot below:



The screenshot shows a web form for eligibility. It has two columns. The left column has a dropdown menu for 'Service Category' with 'Ultrasound' selected, and a text input field for 'Prescription Ref'. The right column has a dropdown menu for 'Ultrasound Category' with 'Ultrasound Category' selected, a search input field, and a list of options: 'First Trimester', 'Second Trimester', and 'Third Trimester'. A 'Submit' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

2. If rejection is received from OpenJet (OBUS-001 Service may be appropriate but Obstetric ultrasound has already been done this trimester), provider may request for pre-authorization

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of additional ultrasound. Detailed documentation (including copy of previous ultrasound report from same/other facility) supporting medical necessity is required.

- Daman will cover up to three routine ultrasounds per pregnancy, one per trimester, for normal pregnancy cases. Daman expects the following journey for the majority:

SN	Trimester	Weeks	Main Indications
1A	1st	<14	Confirmation of intrauterine location, pregnancy dating, identifying number of embryos present.
1B	1st	11-13	Assessment of nuchal translucency (NT) and fetal aneuploidy screening.
2	2 <sup>nd</sup>	18-22	Anatomic survey, placental evaluation, cervical length assessment.
3	3 <sup>rd</sup>	>28	Fetal growth surveillance, planning for delivery.

If first trimester genetic screening (nuchal translucency) is

- NOT a consideration, a 1<sup>st</sup> trimester dating ultrasound anytime between 7 and 13 6/7 weeks is acceptable. (1A-2-3)
- Intended, it would be reasonable to defer dating to the time of nuchal translucency ultrasound. (1B-2-3)

- Ultrasound for proven cases of emergency are excluded from the count (3 per pregnancy) and from eligibility check requirement.
- Quick-look bedside ultrasounds are considered part of the E/M consultation by Daman and not to be billed separately. Only ultrasounds meeting documentation requirements as per coding conventions may be billed.
- All claims will be subject to Clinician specialty rules:
  - Ordering and performing clinicians must be included on the claim.
  - Only clinicians who are adequately trained and credentialed to perform OB ultrasounds may do so.
- Supplementary ICD10CM diagnosis specifying age of gestation should be included in the pre-approval request and/or claim.
- Correct trimester and frequency rules will be applied. For example, first trimester scan must be performed before 14 weeks AOG and only once per pregnancy.
- Daman may confirm with the random top utilizing members the following: trips to the ER, multiple gestations, signs/symptoms/medical conditions raised by providers for additional ultrasounds.

Daman will be analysing patterns of overutilization and necessary measures will be taken.

## Requirements for Coverage

ICD and CPT codes must be coded to the highest level of specificity.

Abu Dhabi providers only:

- Ordering and performing clinicians must be included in the claim.
- Eligibility must be obtained for each obstetric ultrasound. If a rejection note is received (OBUS-001), provider may then request for pre-authorization for additional ultrasound for proven medically necessary indications.

## Non-Coverage

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Doc Ctrl No.:	TEMP/350	Version No.:	1	Revision No.:	0	Date of Issue:	13.10.2016	Page No(s).:	3 of 5
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Obstetric Ultrasounds are not covered:

- For members without Maternity benefit and for Visitor’s Plan.
- For claims without corresponding eligibility or prior authorization (except in proven emergency cases).
- If repeated before the interval recommended by best practice and coding rules.
- If ordered/performed by inappropriate clinician.

## Payment and Coding Rules

Please apply DOH/DHA payment rules and regulations, as well as relevant coding manuals for ICD, CPT, etc.

## Denial codes

Code description
Service is not clinically indicated based on good clinical practice.
Service is not clinically indicated based on good clinical practice, without additional supporting diagnoses/activities.
Service/ supply may be appropriate, but too frequent.
Service(s) is (are) not covered.
Payment is included in allowance for another service.
Clinician ID is not eligible to bill this service.
Submission not compliant with contractual agreement between provider and payment.

## Appendices

### A. References

- HAAD Standard for Routine Antenatal Screening and Care.
- DHA Antenatal Care Protocols.
- AIUM-ACR-ACOG-SMFM-SRU Practice Parameter for the Performance of Standard Diagnostic. Obstetric Ultrasound Examinations.
- ACR-ACOG-AIUM-SMFM-SRU Practice Parameter for the Performance of Standard Diagnostic. Obstetrical Ultrasound.
- American College of Radiology Appropriateness Criteria.
- Toward Optimized Practice Determination of Gestational Age by Ultrasound Clinical Practice Guideline.
- Toward Optimized Practice Second Trimester Detailed Anatomic Study Clinical Practice Guideline.
- Toward Optimized Practice Third Trimester Fetal Well-Being Studies: Criteria and Managing. Results Clinical Practice Guideline.
- AAFP Obstetric Ultrasound Examination (Position Paper).
- MCG Guideline: Pregnant Uterus, Transabdominal Ultrasound.
- MCG Guideline: Pregnant Uterus, Transvaginal Ultrasound.

### B. Revision History

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Doc Ctrl No.:	TEMP/350	Version No.:	1	Revision No.:	0	Date of Issue:	13.10.2016	Page No(s).:	4 of 5
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Date	Change(s)
07/04/19	Release of V1.0

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Doc Ctrl No.:	TEMP/350	Version No.:	1	Revision No.:	0	Date of Issue:	13.10.2016	Page No(s).:	5 of 5
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