

Factors influencing choice of third trimester gestational age for ultrasound surveillance

Traditionally, the third-trimester scan has been performed at 32–34 weeks in particular for surveillance indicated by clinical risk factors and obstetric history.

For patients with risk factors for placenta related adverse obstetric outcomes, 36 - 37 weeks is best gestational age for risk assessment for *term preeclampsia* employing Fetal Medicine Foundation multi-factorial algorithm (see PDF #26.)

Literature review suggesting 36 weeks is best gestational age for third trimester non indicated (low risk) surveillance:

Two randomized controlled trials (Khan; Policiano) have shown that a scan at around 36 weeks is more effective at detecting LGA and FGR than is a scan closer to 32 weeks.

In low-risk pregnancies, routine ultrasound examination at 36 weeks' gestation was more effective than that at 32 weeks' gestation in detecting LGA and FGR and related adverse perinatal and neonatal outcomes.

Among low-risk pregnancies, compared with routine care with indicated ultrasound examination, implementation of a universal third-trimester ultrasound examination at 36.0-37.6 weeks attenuated composite neonatal and maternal adverse outcomes.

*Roberts. Indicated vs universal third-trimester ultrasound examination in low-risk pregnancies: a pre-post-intervention study. *Am J Obstet Gynecol MFM*. 2024 May;6(5):101373.

*Khalil. ISUOG Practice Guidelines: performance of third-trimester obstetric ultrasound scan. *Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol* Jan 2024. v263: 131-147.

*Khan. Prediction of large-for-gestational-age neonate by routine third-trimester ultrasound. *Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol* 2019; 54: 326–333.

*Policiano. Routine Ultrasound at 30th-33rd weeks versus 30th-33rd and 35th-37th weeks in Low-Risk Pregnancies: A Randomized Trial. *Fetal Diagn Ther* 2022; 49: 425–433.

*Wanyonyi. Routine third-trimester ultrasound for the detection of small-for-gestational age in low-risk pregnancies (ROTTUS study): randomized controlled trial. *Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol*, 2021. 57: 910-916.

*Roma. Ultrasound screening for fetal growth restriction at 36 vs 32 weeks' gestation: a randomized trial (ROUTE). *Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol*. 2015 Oct;46(4):391-7.