



## Arizona State Board of Nursing

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An advisory opinion adopted by AZBN is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of AZBN regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training, and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and or decrease risk.

**OPINION: ULTRASOUND: THERAPEUTIC &  
OB DIAGNOSTIC**  
**APPROVED DATE: 1/97**  
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**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:**  
**SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE**

### ADVISORY OPINION ULTRASOUND: THERAPEUTIC & OB DIAGNOSTIC

For the purpose of this Advisory Opinion, Therapeutic Ultrasound is defined as follows:  
Therapeutic ultrasound is applied to promote wound healing, stimulate bone repair, and accelerate healing in tendon injuries and as a thrombolytic agent. These techniques are all part of the scope of practice of a licensed physical therapist, not a Registered Nurse (RN).

For the purpose of this Advisory Opinion, Limited OB/GYN Diagnostic Ultrasound is defined as follows:  
Limited ultrasound examinations are ordered to obtain specific, limited information when it is necessary or impossible to perform a complete fetal or gynecologic survey. The specific components of a limited ultrasound exam should be outlined in the institutions policies and procedures. Limited exams in ante partum and intrapartum settings may include identification of fetal number, fetal presentation, presence or absence of fetal cardiac activity, localization of the placenta, assessment of amniotic fluid volume, and a biophysical profile. In gynecologic or infertility settings, limited exams may include assessments of uterine size, and position, endometrial thickness, presence and size of ovarian follicles. Limited OB/GYN ultrasounds provide essential information for patient management while full scope ultrasounds are necessary for patient assessment and evaluation.

It is within the scope of practice of an RN to perform and interpret limited OB/GYN diagnostic ultrasound if the following requirements are met.

- I. General Requirements
  - A. A written policy and procedure is maintained by the employer.
  - B. Only RNs who have satisfactorily completed an agency's instructional program and have had supervised clinical practice are allowed to perform limited OB/GYN diagnostic ultrasound.
  - C. Documentation of satisfactory completion of the instruction and supervised clinical practice and continued competency is on file with the employer.
- II. Course of Instruction to Include:
  - A. Anatomy and physiology related to the ultrasound-targeted system.
  - B. Indications and contraindications of diagnostic ultrasound.
  - C. Ultrasound physics and instrumentation.
  - D. Clinical demonstration of ultrasonic imaging.
  - E. Patient education.
  - F. Interpretation.
  - G. Understanding the implications for patient care from ultrasound findings.
  - H. Nursing care responsibilities.

Rationale:

Consistent with the current state of practice, according to Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) guidelines.

Reference:

Hayes, Karen W. "Ultrasound." Manual of Physical Agents. Hayes, Karen W. ed. Norwalk: Appleton & Lange, 1992.37-48.

AWHONN Perinatal Nursing, Second Edition. 1996 Lippincott.

Guidelines for Limited Ultrasound Examination in Obstetric and Gynecologic/Infertility Settings. 2004. AWHONN.

OB/GYN Limited Ultrasound Resource Manual.2004. AWHONN.