

Screening in pregnancy for Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome

Maternity Services

Information for Patients

Produced: October 2018
Last reviewed: May 2022
Next review: May 2025
Leaflet number: 281 Version: 2

Introduction

At your first appointment with the midwife you were offered screening for Down's, Edwards' and Patau's syndrome. If you would like to have these screening tests, they will be performed alongside your dating scan. The combined screening test can only be done between 11 weeks + 2 days and 14 weeks + 1 day of pregnancy.

If you are found to be further on in your pregnancy than this when you attend for your scan, or if we are not able to get good views of your baby to make the required measurements (due to baby's position or if you are above average weight), you will be offered the option of a blood test for Down's syndrome only. This can be done between 14 weeks + 2 days and 20 weeks + 0 days of pregnancy.

You should already have a follow-up appointment arranged with your midwife at your GP surgery at about 15 to 16 weeks of pregnancy. If you don't have this booked, please contact your GP surgery to arrange this.

At your dating scan we will:

- check that the baby's heart is beating.
- count the number of babies.
- measure the baby and confirm when the baby is due.
- if you are found to be between 11 weeks + 2 days and 14 weeks + 1 day of pregnancy, you will be offered the screening test for Down's, Edwards' and Patau's syndrome.

If you do not want a screening test for these conditions, either contact the number on your appointment letter, or tell the person carrying out your scan (sonographer) before the examination starts.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How does the screening test work?

All babies have a small amount of tissue fluid under the skin at the back of the baby's neck. This can be seen and measured on the scan and is known as the 'nuchal translucency'.

Research has shown that extra fluid in this area can mean that there is an increased chance of a chromosomal problem, such as Down's syndrome, or a heart problem.

After your scan a blood sample will be taken from yourself so we can measure the amount of 2 chemicals (HCG and PAPP-A) in your blood. Using your age, your scan result, the blood test results and the number of weeks pregnant you are, it is possible to work out your chance of having a baby with Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome or Patau's syndrome.

Please refer to the leaflet "Tests for you and your baby" given to you by your midwife for more details about these screening tests.

Getting your results

If your result is in the **high chance** group (more than 1 in 150), you will be contacted by a midwife from the hospital during office hours. If this is not possible, a community midwife will be asked to contact you in the evening or over a weekend to ask you to attend the hospital to discuss your result. If the midwife visits and you are not at home she will leave a letter advising you to contact the hospital.

It is important to remember that even with a high chance result, it does not mean that your baby definitely has Down's, Edwards' or Patau's syndrome.

If you are in the high chance group, we will discuss your options with you and offer you further tests. You will be offered either a chorionic villus sampling (CVS) test or an amniocentesis test, depending on how many weeks pregnant you are. Both of these tests will give a definite result but do carry a small risk of miscarriage (about 1 in every 100) because whilst being scanned, a fine needle is put into your tummy to take the sample. There is also the option of further private screening tests that you may wish to consider and this will be discussed with you.

If your result is **low chance** (less than 1 in 150) you will get a letter with the results. This also does not guarantee that your baby does not have Down's, Edwards' or Patau's syndrome, but it does make it unlikely. Please make sure you have arranged a follow-up appointment with your community midwife to discuss the results.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk