Maternity Services

The Quadruple Blood Test
This leaflet gives you information about the Quadruple Test. You can read it alongside the booklet “Screening tests for you and your baby”.

**What is the Quadruple Test?**

This is a screening blood test to find out your risk (chance) of having a baby with Down’s syndrome only.

**What is a screening test?**

Screening tests DO NOT give a definite answer but they do tell us which babies have an increased risk of having Down’s syndrome. Screening tests carry no risk of miscarriage.

Women at increased risk are offered a **diagnostic test (amniocentesis)**, which does have a small risk of causing a miscarriage.

The screening test measures four substances in the mother’s blood. A calculation is made using the levels of these substances, together with the mother’s age, to calculate the risk of having a child with Down’s syndrome. This is a more accurate assessment of risk than using just the mother’s age.

**Who is offered the Quadruple Test?**

This test is offered to pregnant women who are booked for delivery in Oxfordshire and have not been able to have the Combined Test. This could either be because they were more than 13 weeks + 6 days pregnant when scanned or because it was not possible to obtain the necessary views of the baby.

**When is the test performed?**

The blood test is best taken at 15-16 weeks but can be done up to the 20th week of pregnancy.

**What do the results mean?**

Overall, the test will pick up about 90% of babies with Down’s syndrome. **However, the result itself cannot tell you if your baby is affected by Down’s syndrome; it only tells us if there is an increased risk.**
Most women (95%) will have a ‘lower’ risk result; this means that the risk of having a Down’s syndrome baby is less than 1 in 150, but it does not completely rule out the chance of Down’s syndrome.

Approximately 1 in 20 women will have an ‘increased’ risk result. This does not mean that your baby has Down’s syndrome.

All women given an ‘increased’ risk result will be able to discuss this and will be offered a diagnostic test (amniocentesis) to confirm the result.

How and when will I get my results?

‘Lower’ risk results will be sent to you in the post, within two weeks of the test. Your midwife and GP will also be informed.

If your result shows an increased risk, you will be contacted by telephone by one of the specialist midwives.

Choosing whether or not to have these tests is an important decision for you and your baby. You need to make the decision that is right for you. You may find it helpful to discuss this further with your midwife or GP.

Where can I learn more?

Further information is included in the National booklet ‘Screening tests for you and your baby’. You can read this booklet, as well as many others, on the NHS Screening Programmes website:

http://www.screening.nhs.uk/screeninginfo
http://fetalanomaly.screening.nhs.uk/leafletsforparents

Other useful websites:

**Antenatal Results and Choices Support Charity**
Website: www.arc-uk.org
Tel: 0845 077 2290
Tel: 0207 713 7486 (from mobile)

**Down’s syndrome Association**
Website: www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/
Tel: 0333 1212 300
Useful telephone numbers

**Fetal Medicine Unit**
John Radcliffe Hospital
Tel: 01865 221 716

**Screening Co-ordinator**
Tel: 01865 221 087
(Answerphone message service available, if calling outside office hours)

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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