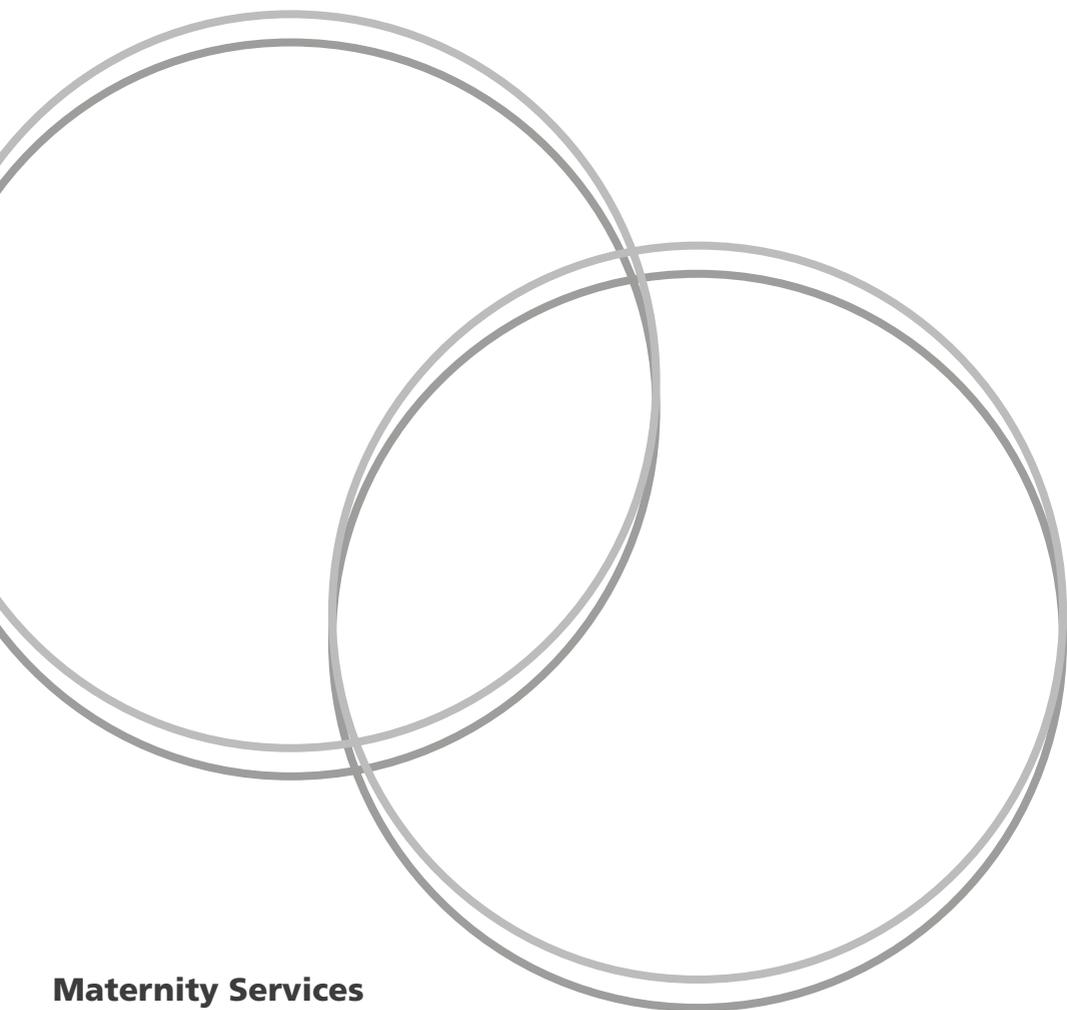




Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Screening tests offered at the early pregnancy ultrasound scan

Information leaflet



Maternity Services



This leaflet explains the screening tests offered at the ultrasound scan performed between 11 weeks and 2 days and 14 weeks and 1 day of pregnancy. It should help you decide whether or not to be tested. It is an extra source of information that you should read alongside our booklet 'Screening tests for you and your baby'.

## **What tests will be offered?**

Women and birthing people in England are offered screening tests for Down's, Edwards' and Patau's syndromes (the combined screening test) in accordance with nationally set quality standards and guidance.

In addition to this, woman and birthing people in Oxfordshire are now being offered screening to determine their chance of developing pre-eclampsia in pregnancy.

These **screening** tests do not give a definite answer, but they do provide an individual assessment of you/or your baby's chance of being affected by the conditions screened for.

If you are at a higher chance having a baby with Down's, Edwards' or Patau's syndromes we will offer you an appointment with Fetal Medicine Unit to discuss further screening or diagnostic tests.

If you are at a higher chance of developing pre-eclampsia during pregnancy, the Community Midwife will contact you.

# What do the screening tests involve?

## The combined test

This test is offered to women and birthing people who are between 11 weeks +2 days and 14 weeks +1 day pregnant at the time of the ultrasound scan. This test can only be offered to people with single or twin pregnancies. It involves measuring the fluid at the back of the baby's neck – this is referred to as the nuchal translucency or NT. A blood sample is also taken from the mother of the baby at this time.

This scan measurement, combined with the mother's age, weight, and biochemical markers in the blood sample, are used to calculate the chance of the baby having Down's syndrome and/or Edwards' and Patau's syndromes. This test is suitable for multiple pregnancies.

Occasionally it may not be possible to see the specific views of the baby that this scan requires. If this happens you will be given further advice at the time about a Quadruple Test.

## Twin pregnancy and the combined test

If the combined test measurement cannot be obtained for one or both babies at the time of the early pregnancy scan, you will be offered a Quadruple Test which screens for Downs syndrome only. The sonographer will discuss this with you (if relevant) at the time.

## The pre-eclampsia screening test

During the ultrasound scan the blood flow to the placenta is measured. This is known as the uterine artery doppler measurement.

This scan measurement, along with the mother's age, weight, height, blood pressure, medical history and biochemical markers in the blood sample, are used to calculate the individual chance of developing pre-eclampsia in pregnancy.

**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 health care professional.**

## What happens next?

Whether you choose to have the combined test and/or the screening for pre-eclampsia, the results are available within two weeks of testing.

### **Possible results of the combined test**

#### **Lower chance result**

For low chance results, you will hear the results within 2 weeks.

If the screening test shows that the chance of having a baby with Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome is lower than 1 in 150 (that is anywhere between 1 in 151 to 1 in 1000), this is called a lower chance result. More than 95 out of 100 screening tests results will be lower chance.

A lower chance result does not mean there is no chance at all of the baby having Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome or Patau's syndrome.

If you have a lower chance result, you will not be offered a further test.

#### **Higher chance result**

For higher chance results, you will be contacted within 3 working days.

If the screening test shows that the chance of the baby having Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome or Patau's syndrome is higher than 1 in 150 (that is anywhere between 1 in 2 and 1 in 150) this is called a higher chance result.

Whilst this may seem confusing, it is important to remember that the lower the number, the higher the chance. So, for example, 1 in 10 is a higher chance of having a baby with Down's syndrome than 1 in 150.

Fewer than 1 in 20 results will be higher chance. This means out of 100 pregnancies screened for Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome, fewer than 5 will have a higher chance result.

A higher chance result does not mean the baby definitely has Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome or Patau's syndrome.

If you have a higher chance result, the Specialist Midwives in Fetal Medicine at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford will contact you and offer you an appointment to discuss the result. Women and birthing people in this 'higher chance' group are offered a further screening or diagnostic tests.

**If you have a higher chance result, you can decide to:**

- Not have any further testing.
- Have a second screening test called non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) – this is a blood test which can give you a more accurate screening result and help you decide whether to have a diagnostic test or not.
- Have a diagnostic test, such as amniocentesis or chorionic villus sampling (CVS) – this will tell you for certain whether or not your baby has Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome or Patau's syndrome. In rare cases, these diagnostic tests can cause a miscarriage.

**You can decide to have an NIPT for:**

- All 3 conditions.
- Down's syndrome only.
- Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome only.

You can also decide to have a diagnostic test after NIPT.

NIPT is completely safe and will not harm your baby.

You can discuss with your healthcare professional which tests are right for you.

## **Possible results of the pre-eclampsia screening test**

### **Lower chance result**

If the pre-eclampsia screening test result is lower than 1 in 100 (that is anywhere between 1 in 101 and 1 in 1000) this is called a lower chance result, and no further action is needed.

### **Higher chance result**

If the pre-eclampsia screening test result is 1 in 100 or higher (that is anywhere between 1 in 2 and 1 in 100) this is called a higher chance result. The Community Midwives will contact you to explain the result and will discuss the option of taking Aspirin to reduce the chance of developing pre-eclampsia.

Whatever results you get from any of the screening or diagnostic tests, you will be offered care and support to help you decide what to do next.

## **Further information**

The following websites give more information about antenatal screening which you may find helpful.

### **NHS Screening Tests Information**

Website: [www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/your-pregnancy-care/screening-tests](http://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/your-pregnancy-care/screening-tests)

### **Antenatal Results and Choices Support Charity**

Website: [www.arc-uk.org](http://www.arc-uk.org)

### **Down's Syndrome Association**

Website: [www.downs-syndrome.org.uk](http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk)

### **SOFTUK**

Support organisation for Edwards' and Patau's syndromes.

Website: [www.soft.org.uk](http://www.soft.org.uk)

## **How to contact us**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

### **Fetal and Maternal Medicine Unit**

Level 6, Women's Centre John Radcliffe Hospital

Telephone: 01865 221 716

### **Screening Co-ordinator**

Telephone: 01865 221 087

(Answerphone message service available, if calling outside office hours)

# Notes



## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

We would like to thank the Oxfordshire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership for their contribution in the development of this leaflet

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
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