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A Guide to Prenatal Genetic Testing

There is a lot you can do during your pregnancy to help you have a healthy baby. Taking prenatal vitamins, eating healthy foods, and getting some exercise and enough sleep will help you have a health pregnancy.

The human body is complicated. Even if you do everything "right" during your pregnancy, things don't always develop normally. Between 3% and 5% of babies have some type of health problem when they are born.

You can be tested during your pregnancy to lean more about your baby's health before baby is born. Your health care provider will talk about these tests with you and ask you to decide which tests you want. It is your choice whether or not to be tested.

What are the tests?

There are two basic types of tests:

- **Screening tests** predict the chance, or odds, that your baby has a certain birth defect.
- **Diagnostic tests** tell you whether or not your baby has a certain birth defect.

The table below and on the next page lists the different tests, along with a timeline an brief description about each one. Let us know if you would like more information to read about them before you talk with your doctor.

SCREENING TESTS			
Name of Test	**When**	**Description**	**What it tells you**
Nuchal translucency (NT) ultrasound	11 to 13 weeks	Abdominal ultrasound to measure small space behind baby's neck.	*Chances* your baby has a chromosome problem.
Integrated screen	11 to 13 weeks and 15 to 22 weeks	NT ultrasound plus 2 separate blood samples.	*Chances* your baby has Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida.
Quad Screen	15 to 22 weeks	1 blood sample	*Chances* your baby has Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida.

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DIAGNOSTIC TESTS			
Name of Test	**When**	**Description**	**What it tells you**
Chorionic villus sampling (CVS)	10 to 13 weeks	Sample of placenta taken vagina or abdomen	*Whether or not* your baby has chromosome problems and sometimes other inherited diseases.
Amniocentesis	15 to 22 weeks	Sample of fluid from around your baby.	*Whether or not* your baby has chromosome problems, spina bifida, and sometimes other inherited diseases.

OTHER TESTS			
Name of Test	**When**	**Description**	**What it tells you**
Anatomy Ultrasound	18 to 22 weeks	Abdominal Ultrasound to check baby's growth and development.	*Whether or not* abnormalities are suspected and if further testing is needed.