JOHNS HOPKINS
MEDICINE

FIRST TRIMESTER SCREENING INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Please check with the front desk staff before using the restroom.

First trimester screening is an optional test that involves an ultrasound and blood work on the mother between 11 weeks and 1 day and 13 weeks 6 days of the pregnancy and is designed specifically to screen pregnancies for Down syndrome, trisomy 18 and trisomy 13 (detection rate is ~95% for all three chromosome conditions). This test does not tell the gender of the baby. The ultrasound measures a fluid filled space on the back of the baby's neck that is known as the nuchal translucency or NT. Studies have found that if the NT measurement is increased this is associated with a higher chance of the baby having a chromosome problem or sometimes other issues such as a heart defect. The ultrasound also looks for the presence or absence of the baby's nasal bone. An absent nasal bone has been associated with a higher chance for Down syndrome in the baby. It is important to remember, however, that an increased NT or absent nasal bone can be normal variants as well. The blood work involves obtaining some of the mother's blood (through a finger stick) and measuring three proteins (free beta HCG, PAPP-A, AFP) that are produced by the pregnancy. Studies have found that certain patterns in these chemicals are also associated with an increased risk for a chromosome problem in the baby.

At today's ultrasound, the sonographer will take several pictures of the baby including the nuchal translucency and nasal bone. Once the study is complete, the sonographer will step out of the room to review all of the pictures with one of our maternal fetal medicine physicians. You will then be informed of the results including if the nuchal translucency is measuring within the typical range or not and if the nasal bone is present or absent.

The final results of the bloodwork and ultrasound combined should be available within one week and our office will call you to discuss these results. If your results indicate an increased risk for either Down syndrome or trisomy 18/13 it is important to remember that this is a screening test and **not** a definitive test. We would recommend that you schedule an appointment with our genetic counselor to discuss further testing options available to you.

First trimester screening does not screen for a particular type of birth defect known as spina bifida (neural tube defect). Therefore, it is recommended that you consider having your blood drawn again at 16-18 weeks to measure alphafetoprotein (AFP) levels that tend to be higher in babies with spina bifida. This bloodwork can be coordinated through your OB's office. It is also recommended that you have another ultrasound at 18-20 weeks to look closely at the baby's anatomy.

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PATIENT INFORMATION REGARDING NTD LABS
FOR FIRST TRIMESTER SCREENING

You are scheduled for a first trimester screening which is a test that involves an ultrasound and blood work on the mother between 11 weeks and 1 day and 13 weeks 6 days of the pregnancy. The ultrasound measures a fluid filled space on the back of the baby's neck that is known as the nuchal translucency or NT as well as the presence or absence of the fetal nasal bone. The blood work involves obtaining some of the mother's blood (through a finger stick) and measuring three proteins (free beta hCG, PAPP-A, and AFP which has been recently added) that are produced by the pregnancy. Our office utilizes NTD Laboratories for all of our first trimester screening blood work given that they are the only lab which measures free beta hCG. Free beta hCG, as compared to the total hCG utilized by other labs, has been shown to provide the highest detection rate for Down Syndrome and trisomy 18 and is able to screen for trisomy 13 as well (which other labs do not). Most insurance companies are contracted with NTD labs (which is part of Eurofins NTD Labs), however, some insurance, mainly Carefirst Blue Choice HMO plans, consider NTD Labs as an out of network lab. NTD Labs will file a claim with your insurance company and if it is denied you will qualify for a discounted rate for the blood work. The discounted rate is $75.00 compared to the standard $240.00. You will receive a bill from NTD Labs for the $240.00. **Once you receive your bill, you will need to call NTD Labs at 1-888-683-5227 within 45 days to receive the discounted rate.**

We strive to provide our families with the highest quality of care including the most sensitive first trimester screening test on the market. We therefore, will be sending your blood work to NTD Labs with your consent. If you would like to check with your insurance company regarding coverage for this blood work, the CPT codes (procedure codes) are as follows: 84704*- Gonadotropin; chorionic (hCG); free beta chain (*exclusive to NTD Labs), 84163-Pregnancy-associated plasma protein-A (PAPP-A) and 82105-alphafetoprotein (AFP). The diagnosis codes are Z34.80 and Z36.0 antenatal screening. The Tax ID# for Eurofins NTD Labs is 112659192.