

Maternity

Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS) and Amniocentesis

This leaflet helps to answer some of the questions that you may have about Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS) and Amniocentesis. It is important to talk with your doctor or midwife to help decide if you want to have one of these tests.

Who this information is for

We offer you a CVS or amniocentesis if:

- The ultrasound scan shows something unexpected.
- A test said there is a higher chance your baby might have Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome, or Patau's syndrome.
- You have had an earlier pregnancy or baby with a genetic condition
- You or the baby's father has someone in their family with a genetic condition like sickle cell disease, thalassaemia, or cystic fibrosis.

It is your decision

This information is here to help, but your doctor or midwife will talk with you to help you make the best choice. They will give you time to think about it, answer your questions, and help you feel supported. You do not have to decide right away. It is your decision.

You can choose to have:

- No more testing
- CVS or amniocentesis



Patient Information

Your healthcare professional should talk to you about:

- What kinds of problems (conditions) these tests can find
- The chance of miscarriage from CVS or amniocentesis
- Which test might be better for you
- How the test is done and how reliable the results are
- If there is a chance you might need to do a test again
- When and how you will get the results
- Your options if your baby has a chromosomal or genetic condition

If you decide to have the test:

- It is a good to bring someone with you, but please do not bring children.
- You can eat and drink as usual before and after the test.
- You might need to have a full bladder when you come for the appointment. Your doctor or midwife will tell you if that is needed. If you are not sure, you can ask them.
- The test usually takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

Your appointment might take longer than this to allow you time to talk about the test first, and we want you to have time to rest afterwards.

Chorionic villus sampling (CVS)

If you have a CVS, we take a tiny sample of tissue from the placenta (placental tissue) for DNA testing. This helps find out if the baby might have certain health problems.

- CVS is usually done from weeks 11 to 14 of pregnancy but can also be done later.
- If the doctor decides it is not safe to do the test at that time, they might wait a week or 2, until the placenta is bigger and easier to reach.
- The test is usually done through your tummy, and sometimes through the cervix. (transcervical or through the neck of the womb). The transabdominal method is the most common and is performed in this hospital. We clean your abdomen (tummy) with antiseptic solution and use a local anaesthetic injection to numb a small area. We insert a fine needle through your abdomen and into your uterus (womb) to take the sample.

Patient Information

- We use an ultrasound probe to guide the direction of the needle. After taking the needle out, your baby is observed for a short time on ultrasound.

The sample from the placenta is sent to the laboratory in two parts:

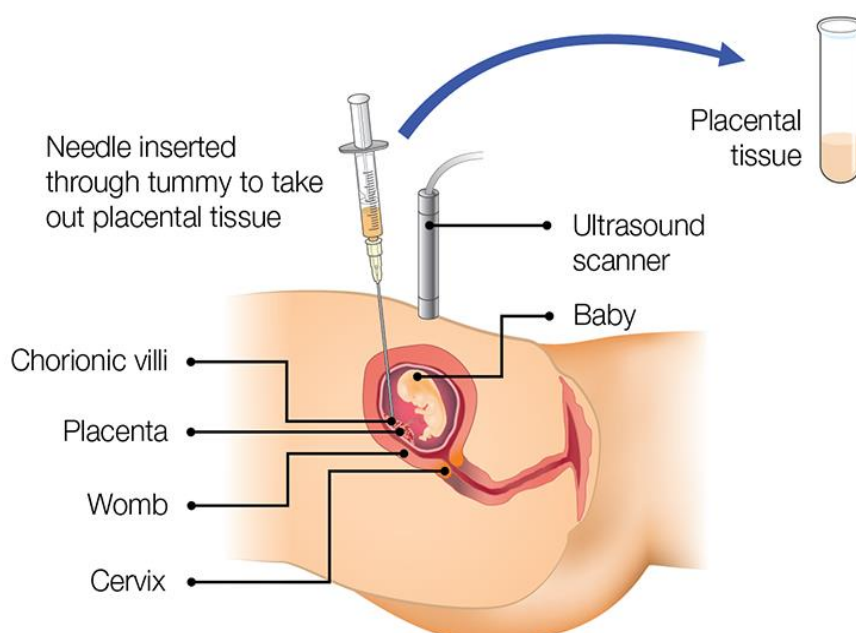
- The first part gives quick results in about 3 days to confirm if your baby has Downs, Edwards, or Patau's syndrome. If any of these syndromes are found, your doctor will talk to you about your options.
- If any of these syndromes are not found, but the scan has shown any unexpected findings the laboratory will do more tests on the sample. The second part is to test samples more closely. These results take 2 to 3 weeks. This is called a microarray test.

It is best to wait for all the results before deciding whether to continue or end your pregnancy.

Sometimes the CVS results show an uncommon condition called confined placental mosaicism (CPM) in which the DNA in the placenta is different from the baby's. If that happens, the doctor will recommend you have Amniocentesis, which means taking a sample of fluid around the baby after 15 weeks gestation (described below).

Chorionic villus sampling (CVS)

transabdominal method



Patient Information

Amniocentesis

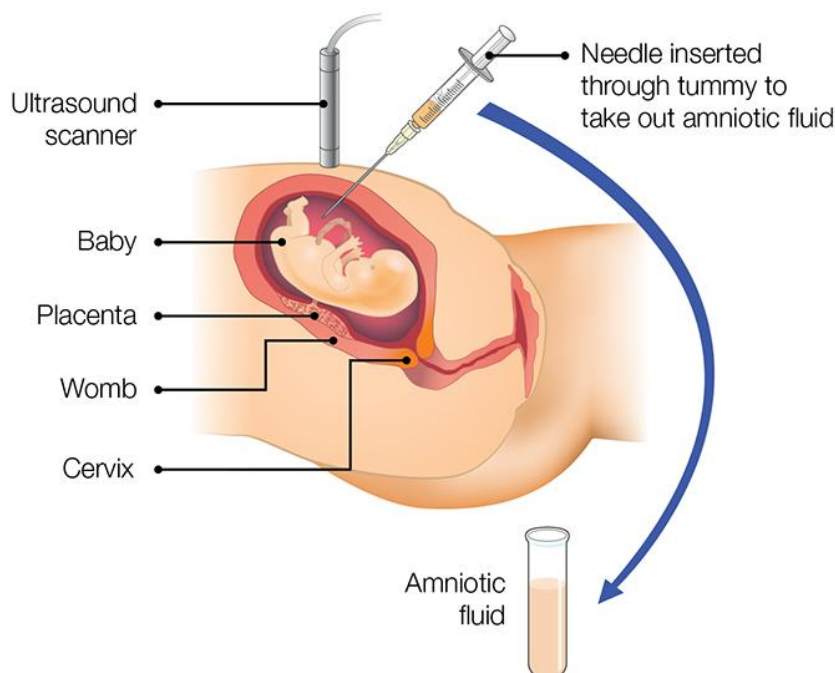
If you have an amniocentesis, the doctor takes a small amount of amniotic fluid (the water around your baby inside your uterus) for testing. The sample has some of the baby's cells, which have genetic information.

- Amniocentesis is done after 15 weeks of pregnancy.
- We clean your abdomen with antiseptic and may use a local anaesthetic injection to numb a small area.
- We insert a fine needle through your abdomen and into your womb to take the sample.
- We use an ultrasound probe to guide the direction of the needle. Sometimes, we may have to re-insert the needle if the first attempt has failed for any reason or rarely, we may offer you an appointment to have the amniocentesis done again on another day.

After the test, the baby is checked for a short time on ultrasound.

The results are available in around 3 days to check for Downs, Edwards, and Patau's syndrome. It can take 2 to 3 weeks to check the rest of the chromosomes (called microarray). Amniocentesis is a true reflection of the baby's DNA.

Amniocentesis



Patient Information

Risks of CVS and amniocentesis

- Most women say the test feels uncomfortable, like period pain, but not very painful.
- You might feel anxious before and after the test.
- You might have some cramping for a few hours after. This is normal. You can take paracetamol if it hurts.
- You do not need to rest or stop driving after the test.

Sometimes the first tests do not give clear results, and about 6 in 100 women (6%) may need to have the test again.

1 in 200 women who have a CVS or amniocentesis will miscarry. We do not know why some women miscarry after these tests, and it usually happens within 3 days, but it can happen up to 2 weeks later. There is nothing you can do to stop it if it happens.

- There is a risk of less than 1 in 1,000 chance that CVS or amniocentesis will cause a serious infection. Call your midwife, doctor, or hospital right away if you have: Strong or lasting pain
- A high temperature of 38°C (100.4°F) or more
- Chills or shivering
- Heavy vaginal bleeding
- Clear fluid (discharge) coming out of the vagina
- Contractions

Testing women who are pregnant with twins

You can have a CVS or amniocentesis if you are pregnant with twins, but the test is more complicated. The doctor may need to insert the needle twice to get samples of placenta or fluid from each baby. With CVS there is a small chance of getting 2 samples from the same baby, which could confuse the results.

The risk of miscarriage is about twice as it is with 1 baby. single pregnancies. If a miscarriage happens, it could mean losing both babies.

Patient Information

Other things to think about

- If your blood group is Rh (rhesus) negative, it will be recommended that you have an injection of anti-D immunoglobulin after the test to stop your body from making antibodies that could harm your baby's blood cells.
- If you have HIV, Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C viruses, CVS or amniocentesis might increase the chance of passing it on to your baby. The specialist team caring for you will be able to offer more advice.

Results

- The hospital will send the sample of tissue from your placenta (CVS) or amniotic fluid (amniocentesis) to a laboratory for testing.
- Depending on the type of laboratory test, you will usually get 2 results, the first after 3 days and the second after 2 weeks.
- Most CVS or amniocentesis results show babies do not have the condition the test was looking for.
- Some women will be told their baby has the condition the test was looking for.
- Very rarely, the test might find a different condition than what they were looking for.
- These tests can rule out most conditions, but not all. You can discuss this with your healthcare professional if you need to.

If the result shows your baby has a condition, your doctor, midwife, or specialist will talk to you about what this might mean for you and the baby

You can choose to:

- continue with your pregnancy
- end the pregnancy (have a termination)

Support and care after the test

Deciding whether to continue with the pregnancy is a very personal choice.

- If you decide to continue with your pregnancy, your doctor or midwife will talk to you about how to take care of your baby before and after birth.

Patient Information

- If you decide to end your pregnancy, your team will explain what will happen next and what choices you have.
- No matter what you choose, your doctors and nurses will support you.

More information

You can find more information about CVS on the National Screening Committee website: www.fetalanomaly.screening.nhs.uk or <http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/> or <http://www.arc-uk.org>.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact us on the following numbers:

Antenatal screening co-ordinators: 024 7696 7412

Fetal Medicine Department: 024 7696 6572

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 7000 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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