

## Maternity

# Ventriculomegaly

### What does this mean?

In the brain, there are 5 fluid-filled holes called ventricles. These ventricles produce and are filled with cerebrospinal fluid, which surrounds and moves around the brain and spinal cord.

Among these, there are 2 lateral ventricles, one on either side of your baby's brain. These ventricles are routinely measured during the mid-trimester anomaly scan (around 20 weeks). The normal width of each lateral ventricles is up to 10mm. If the sonographer finds that one or both ventricles appear larger than 10mm, then this is called ventriculomegaly.

Ventriculomegaly happens in about 1 in 100 babies. It is classified as follows:

- **Mild:** Up to 12mm
- **Moderate:** Up to 15mm
- **Severe:** More than 15mm

### What causes ventriculomegaly?

In most babies, ventriculomegaly is a normal variation and after further investigations, we can reassure you of this. However, other potential causes of ventriculomegaly include:

- Infections such as toxoplasmosis and cytomegalovirus



## Patient Information

- Underlying anomalies in the brain or an obstruction
- Chromosomal or genetic anomalies
- Bleeding in the brain which is rare

### **What happens if the baby has ventriculomegaly?**

If your baby is diagnosed with ventriculomegaly, you will be referred to the Fetal Medicine Unit (FMU) at University Hospital Coventry. There, a consultant will perform a detailed ultrasound scan of your baby's brain. This is to look for any structural anomalies or issues in other areas.

You will be offered a blood test to rule out infections that can lead to ventriculomegaly. Additionally, you may be offered an invasive test called amniocentesis, which involves taking a sample of the amniotic fluid around your baby to check for chromosomal abnormalities. This procedure will be discussed in more detail at your appointment.

Later in the pregnancy, you might be offered an MRI scan to provide a more detailed view of your baby's brain structure. You will also have regular ultrasound scans to monitor any changes in the size of your baby's lateral ventricles.

### **What does this mean for when your baby is born?**

The outcome for your baby will depend on factors such as if there is any underlying cause and the severity of the condition. We will involve the baby doctors, who may want to have a discussion with you about further management plan.

It is difficult to provide reliable figures on the likelihood of neurological problems in babies diagnosed with ventriculomegaly during pregnancy. Although there is still insufficient data, research indicates that the risk of a neurological impairment is not higher than 10% when the ventriculomegaly is mild and isolated. This is about the same as the rest of the population.

**Please call the Fetal Medicine Contact number on 024 7696 6572.**

## Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this Information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6572 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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