



## Indiana State Department of Health

### Prenatal Diagnosis of Down Syndrome and Other Conditions

#### Screening Tests and Diagnostic Tests

Some types of prenatal tests are **screening** tests. These can tell you if your baby has a higher chance of having a certain condition. If a **screening** test has a positive result, additional **diagnostic** testing is required to see with more certainty if the baby actually has a disorder. **Diagnostic** testing usually happens after a positive **screening** test result. *It is important to talk to your doctor about what your test results mean.* It may also be helpful to see a genetic counselor, who can discuss what life might be like for your baby if he or she has a disorder.

#### What conditions are diagnosed prenatally?

- Chromosomal abnormalities, like Down syndrome
- Neural tube defects, like spina bifida
- Some rarer disorders

#### How can this information help?

Receiving a diagnosis before the baby is born can be helpful because:

- It allows you to learn as much as you can about your baby's disorder before birth. This can help you prepare both mentally and financially for the birth of your baby.
- Knowing a diagnosis may influence where the baby should be delivered.
  - Some health problems are more common among babies who have Down syndrome. Close to half of all babies with Down syndrome are also born with a heart defect. You might decide to deliver at a more specialized hospital in case your baby needs to be treated for one of these problems.
  - A baby with spina bifida may need surgery within the first few days after being born. Surgery can close the defect and help prevent infections and further injury to the spinal cord.
- For some types of spina bifida and other conditions, fetal surgery to treat the defect during pregnancy might be an option. This type of surgery is experimental and may not be available in Indiana.

#### Where can I learn more about my baby's condition?

- **Genetics Home Reference**  
<http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/>
- **Mayo Clinic: Diseases and Conditions**  
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions>

#### What are some other resources?

- **Children's Special Health Care Services**  
800.475.1355  
<http://www.cshcs.in.gov>
- **Indiana Family Helpline**  
855.435.7178
- **The Arc of Indiana**  
800.382.9100  
<http://www.arcind.org/>
- **Down Syndrome Indiana**  
888.989.9255  
<http://www.dsindiana.org/Parents.php>
- **First Steps**  
800.545.7763  
<http://www.in.gov/fssa/4655.htm>
- **About Special Kids**  
800.964.4746  
<http://www.aboutspecialkids.org/>
- **Family Voices Indiana**  
317.944.8982  
<http://fvindiana.org/>
- **IN\*SOURCE**  
800.332.4433  
<http://insource.org/>