



OB/GYN Specialists of Brevard

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QUAD SCREENING FOR BIRTH DEFECTS

During the course of your prenatal care, you will be offered a screening test for birth defects. This test is offered across the country to women who are 15 to 22 weeks along in their pregnancies. Its purpose is to determine if you are at an increased risk of having a child with a Neural Tube Defect (a malformation of the spine or skull which can cause paralysis or which can be fatal) or with Down Syndrome (a genetic defect causing mental retardation and other physical problems), as well as Trisomy 15 and Trisomy 18, two other chromosomal abnormalities.

The test you will be offered will require you to have blood drawn. The specimen will be analyzed for four substances: alpha-fetoprotein (AFP – a blood protein produced by the growing fetus which is present in the amniotic fluid and can be detected in small levels in your blood), human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG), Estriol (two hormones made by the placenta) and Inhibin. Based on the levels of these substances found in your blood and your age at the time of delivery, you may be found to be at an increased risk for a Neural Tube Defect, Down Syndrome or Aneuploidy (abnormal chromosomes).

You should remember that this is a screening test. It does not say that your baby actually has these problems. It only says that you may be at risk for having them. If your test comes back abnormal, we will have you see a perinatologist who will discuss with you what your test results mean. In addition, because this is a screening test, a normal result does not guarantee a perfect baby.

At the perinatologist's office, those people with an abnormal test will be offered an ultrasound first. This will confirm that your due date is accurate and evaluate the baby's anatomy for any abnormalities. You may also be offered an amniocentesis (placement of a slender needle into the uterine cavity to take out some of the fluid) to see if the AFP is really elevated in the fluid. If a problem is found, this information can be important in preparing for delivery. Should no problem be found, we will still follow your pregnancy more closely.

Those people who are at risk for Down Syndrome, Trisomy 15, or Trisomy 18 will be offered an amniocentesis to look at the baby's chromosomes. If they are normal, you can be reassured and be followed in your pregnancy as usual. If they are abnormal, you will be informed about what this means and what you can do next.

If you are over the age of 35, we will be offering you a perinatology consult, level II ultrasound as well as an amniocentesis. You can speak with us to see why your baby is at a slightly greater risk for chromosomal problems. You will still be offered the Quad Screen Test because this can tell us about the risk of a Neural Tube Defect as well as the risk of your baby having any chromosomal abnormalities.

Because this is a screening test, not everyone who has a "positive" test will have a problem. Since we have to offer further testing to everyone who tests "positive", there are some patients who will undergo other testing only to find out that the test was a false positive. You may choose not to have testing done and your pregnancy can be managed without this screening. It is only offered so that you can know more about your pregnancy and potentially identify problems early if they exist, so that if any special needs will be required at the time of delivery, appropriate arrangements can be made.

I accept _____
PRINT NAME SIGNATURE

DOB _____

I decline _____
PRINT NAME SIGNATURE

Date _____

Witness _____

Date _____