

Low PAPP-A

This leaflet has been given to you because the level of one hormone (PAPP-A) measured at your combined screening test has come back low.

This does not alter the result of the screening test that you were given.

We hope this leaflet will be helpful in understanding more about this hormone and what we would plan for you.

What is PAPP-A?

Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein-A (PAPP-A) is one of the hormones checked during the combined screening test for Trisomy 21 (Down's syndrome), 18 (Edwards' syndrome) and 13 (Patau's syndrome). It is produced by your placenta (afterbirth).

Low PAPP-A has been associated with:

- Small babies at birth because the placenta may not function well.
- Increased risk of delivering your baby earlier than term.
- Miscarriage or stillbirth in the second half of the pregnancy.
- Increased risk of developing raised blood pressure and protein in your urine during the pregnancy, called pre-eclampsia.

The majority of pregnancies with low PAPP-A will progress as normal and the babies will be of normal weight.

What happens next?

You will be advised to take a low dose of aspirin (150mg) once a day, from 12 weeks of pregnancy UNLESS you have any reason that you cannot take aspirin, such as an allergy, severe asthma, chronic kidney problems, stomach ulcers, or have been previously advised not to take aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

At around 20 weeks, during your routine anomaly scan, we will also check the blood flow to the placenta from your uterus. Depending on the outcome of this blood flow study, the sonographer (person doing the ultrasound scan) will ask you to book further scans at 28, 32 and 36 weeks OR 32 and 36 weeks to assess baby's growth.

If there are any concerns about your baby's wellbeing or growth at your scan, you will be asked to see a doctor or a midwife on the same day. If the scan is normal, it can be reviewed at your next scheduled appointment with your midwife or consultant.

What can I do to help my baby?

As you are at an increased risk of developing pre-eclampsia it is important you attend all the appointments that are scheduled to check your blood pressure and urine.

If you smoke, it is advisable to quit as smoking increases the risk of your placenta not functioning well. There is support available to help you with this so please contact your midwife or GP to arrange this.

We recommend that you remain aware of the pattern of your baby's movements and to call Maternity Triage if you have any concerns.

What if I have some questions?

Please speak to your community midwife or a member of the maternity team.

Further information

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG):

- **Having a small baby**
<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/patient-leaflets/having-a-small-baby/>
- **Pre-eclampsia**
<https://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-our-patient-information/pre-eclampsia/>

Please ask a member of the maternity team if you would like a copy of these leaflets.

Useful contact details

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust:

- Website www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk
- Telephone 01438 314333

Leaflet information

You can request this information in a different format or another language; please speak to your doctor or nurse.

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