

Maternal serum screening

Your pregnancy, your choice



What is maternal serum screening?

Maternal serum screening is an optional blood test available during pregnancy. This prenatal screening test can tell you the chance that your pregnancy may have a chromosome condition, such as Down syndrome.

Screening is available during the first trimester (between 9-13 weeks) or the second trimester of pregnancy (15-17 weeks).

Prenatal screening tests are optional.

What will this test tell me?

Maternal serum screening looks for the most common chromosome conditions seen during pregnancy: Down syndrome, Edwards syndrome and Patau syndrome.

If you choose screening during the first trimester, you can also find out about your chance of developing early onset pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure).

What does serum screening cost?

There is a partial Medicare rebate for combined first trimester screening, which can be claimed after testing. The out of pocket cost is approximately \$93.

How does maternal serum screening work?

Combined first trimester screening

This screening test has two parts: a blood test and an ultrasound (called nuchal translucency or NT ultrasound).

Part 1: blood test

Ideally between 10-11 weeks of pregnancy. However, a sample between 9 weeks and 13 weeks + 6 days is acceptable.

Part 2: ultrasound

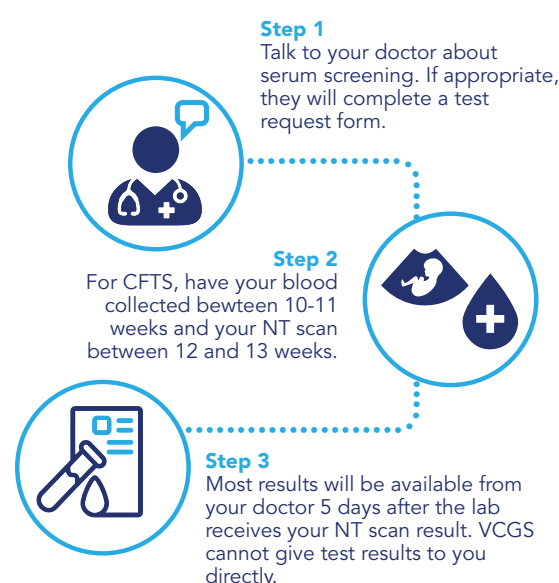
Ideally performed between 12 and 13 weeks of pregnancy. However, between 11 weeks + 1 day and 13 weeks + 6 days is acceptable.

CFTS requires both the blood test and the ultrasound. A result cannot be calculated otherwise.

Second trimester maternal serum screening

This is a blood test only. The sample is best collected between 14 and 20 weeks of pregnancy.

How do I arrange testing?



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How are results reported?

First trimester screening - results will be sent to your doctor approximately 5 days after the laboratory receives your ultrasound result.

Second trimester screening – results are usually available from your doctor within one week of having your blood collected.

Maternal serum screening results are reported as 'screen negative' or 'screen positive'. A result might also be reported as a number, for example, 1 in 300.

Screen negative or low chance: this means it is unlikely your pregnancy has one of the conditions screened for. It's important to note that false negative results can occur. Also, there is no screening test that can rule out all possible conditions.

Screen positive or high chance: a screen positive result does not mean your pregnancy is affected by one of the conditions being screened for; it means there is an increased chance. In most cases, your baby will not have the condition.

In this case, you can have a diagnostic test to confirm the result. Our clinical team can help you and your doctor manage and understand diagnostic testing.

Key things to know

- Maternal serum screening is not a diagnostic test. It estimates the chance that your pregnancy may have a chromosome condition. It does not give a yes or no answer.
- In most cases, women/couples will receive a screen negative/low chance result.
- However, some people will receive a screen positive/high chance result. This means the pregnancy may have a chromosome condition.
- It can be helpful to discuss how you might manage a high chance result before testing.
- There can be false results with all screening tests. This is why a diagnostic test is recommended to confirm any high chance results.
- Maternal serum screening does not look for all possible genetic and chromosome conditions.
- We offer free comprehensive information and support with maternal serum screening tests. Our clinical support team are available to speak with you before testing, or after receiving your results.

Pregnancy screening team: (03) 9936 6402

Blood collection site

To find a blood collection site please visit <https://collection-sites.vcgs.org.au/>