

Prenatal Testing: Integrated Screen

At UW Maternal Fetal Medicine in Yakima

At UW Maternal Fetal Medicine in Yakima, we partner with our patients and families in making decisions about their healthcare. This handout gives information to help you decide if you want to have an integrated screen.

It is your decision whether or not to do the test. Talk with your healthcare provider to learn more.

What is an integrated screen?

An *integrated screen* is a test done during pregnancy. It tells you the chance of your baby having *Down syndrome*, *trisomy 18*, or *spina bifida*. The integrated screen does **not** diagnose these conditions.

How is an integrated screen done?

An integrated screen has 4 parts:

- An **ultrasound** done between 11 and 14 weeks of pregnancy
- A **consult with a genetic counselor** on the same day as your ultrasound
- **2 blood draws** from the mother's arm, done at different times

The Ultrasound

During the ultrasound, your baby's length will be measured to confirm the due date.

Ultrasound will also be used to measure the small space under the skin behind your baby's neck. This space is called the *nuchal translucency*, or NT. The NT is often larger than normal when the baby has Down syndrome or trisomy 18.



As part of your integrated screen, an ultrasound will be done between 11 and 14 weeks of pregnancy.

Consult with a Genetic Counselor

Genetic counseling can help you decide what tests, if any, are right for you. The consult usually is on the same day as your ultrasound.

At your genetic consult, a genetic counselor will:

- Ask you about your pregnancy and family history.
- Describe Down syndrome, trisomy 18, and spina bifida.
- Explain how the integrated screen test works and how you will get results.

Blood Draws

The 2 blood tests measure certain proteins and hormones made by the baby and placenta. These proteins and hormones are found in every pregnant woman's blood, but the amounts are often different when the baby has Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida.

- The **1st blood draw** is done in the 1st trimester, usually the same day as the ultrasound and genetic consult.
- The **2nd blood draw** is done in the 2nd trimester, between 15 and 20 weeks of pregnancy.

What do I learn from an integrated screen?

Results are given in numbers such as "1 in 4,000" or "1 in 75." These numbers show how likely it is that your baby has Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida. Your results will include numbers for each condition.

The integrated screen can detect:

- 90 out of 100 babies who have Down syndrome or trisomy 18
- 80 out of 100 babies who have spina bifida

The integrated screen does not test for any other health issues. The results of the screen are more accurate for a single baby than for multiples.

What are the benefits of an integrated screen?

An integrated screen gives you information about your baby's health without any risk to your pregnancy. Because we know more about your baby's health from the screen results, it may also help us provide you with better care during your pregnancy.

What are the risks of an integrated screen?

A *positive* result can cause worry or stress for the parents and other family members.

What can I expect after the test?

The results from your integrated screen are usually available within 1 week after the 2nd blood draw.

“Positive” Results

About 5% of women (5 women out of 100) have a “positive” integrated screen. This does **not** mean their baby has a birth defect. It only means that the risk of their baby having either Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida is higher than a certain level. **Most women who have a positive integrated screen result will have a healthy baby.**

If you have a positive result, we will want to meet with you to talk about your results. We will also talk about doing other tests or another ultrasound to get more information about your baby.

“Negative” Results

About 95% of women (about 95 out of 100) have a “negative” integrated screen. This does not mean their baby is completely healthy. It only means that the chance of the baby having either Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida is lower than a certain level. **A few women who have a negative integrated screen result will have a baby with Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or spina bifida.**

Other Options

If the NT cannot be measured in your baby, you can still get results from the 2 blood draws. The results will be a little less accurate without the NT measurement.

If you are already past 14 weeks of pregnancy, ask your provider about doing a test called a *quad screen*, instead of an integrated screen.

Questions?

Your questions are important. If you have any further questions about an integrated screen, talk with your provider before signing consent forms.

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