

# Low PAPP-A

## Information for parents

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

You have been given this leaflet because your recent combined screening test for Down's Syndrome and combined Edwards and Patau's Syndrome, has detected a low PAPP-A level. This does not affect the results of the screening tests that you will have already received.

## What is PAPP-A?

Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein A (PAPP-A) is a hormone that is produced by the placenta in pregnancy. It is one of two hormones that are measured during the combined screening test for Down's, Edwards and Patau's Syndrome.

Low PAPP-A levels are found in approximately 5% of all pregnancies and studies have shown, that it may be associated with low birth weight babies (growth restricted) or an earlier than expected (preterm) baby. There is also a chance that your pregnancy may be affected by raised blood pressure and protein in the urine, a condition known as pre-eclampsia. Because of this, national guidelines suggest that extra ultrasound scans should be considered, to check the growth of babies when a low PAPP-A level has been found.

## When will I have the growth scan?

We will ask you to attend the Maternity Ultrasound Department between 22 and 24 weeks for a uterine artery Doppler ultrasound (to check the blood flow between you and your baby) as well as growth scans from 32, 36 and 39 weeks as a minimum to check the growth of the baby, the placenta, and the amniotic fluid (water) levels.

These additional scans and measurements give us vital information which can assist us to support you and your baby during pregnancy. If there are any concerns about your baby's growth, we will arrange further appointments or referrals for you as appropriate.

From 25 weeks, your midwife will also plot the growth of your bump on your individualised **grow** chart. We will also continue to check your blood pressure and urine at your routine appointments, so that we can identify any changes at an early stage and manage your care appropriately.

## Is there anything I can do help my baby to grow well?

If you smoke, it is extremely important that you stop. Smoking can seriously affect the function of the placenta and the baby's growth. The earlier in pregnancy a woman stops smoking, the greater the reduction of complications in the pregnancy.

Stopping smoking at any time during pregnancy will improve the blood flow and oxygen that the baby receives and therefore improve outcomes. Research shows that with Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), combined with behavioural support, you are three times more likely to quit smoking successfully.

Your midwife can refer you to our in-house smokefree pregnancy practitioner at Whiston hospital, who can support you to stop smoking.

Monitoring your baby's movements is also a good way to check on your baby's wellbeing.

**If your baby's movements concern you, slow down or stop you must contact the maternity triage immediately on 0151 290 4489**

### Who can I speak to if I need further information?

You are welcome to phone one of the antenatal screening midwives if you have any queries or concerns on 0151 478 7615 or call the Antenatal Clinic on 0151 430 1493.

Receiving the news that you have low PAPP-A levels may cause anxiety, but please be assured that **the majority of babies will have normal growth.**

For those babies that are found to be small, you will have the reassurance of close monitoring with the midwifery team and the obstetricians in our Feto Maternal Assessment Unit.

### Further information

#### Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

'Having a small baby' leaflet - [www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/patient-leaflets/having-a-small-baby/](http://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/patient-leaflets/having-a-small-baby/)



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