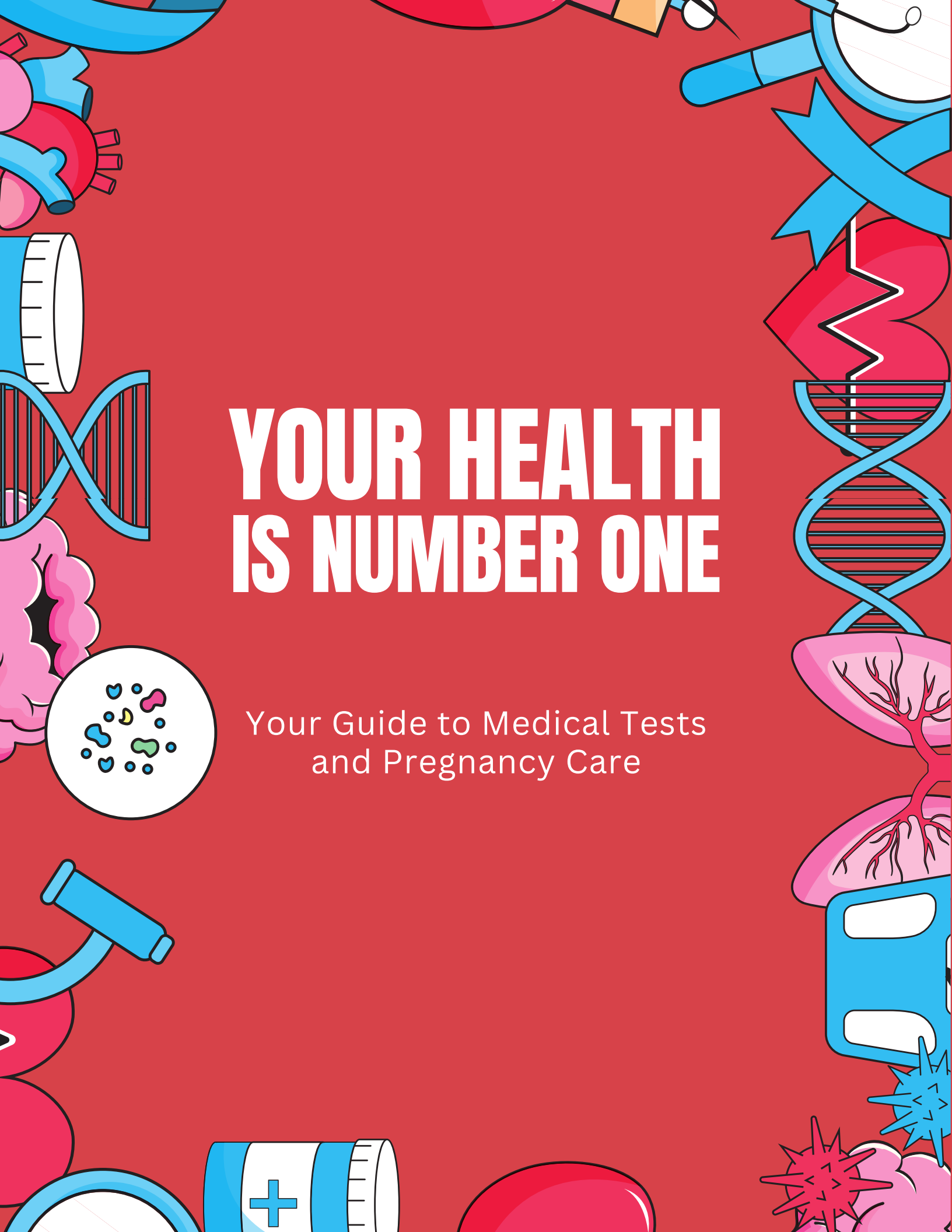
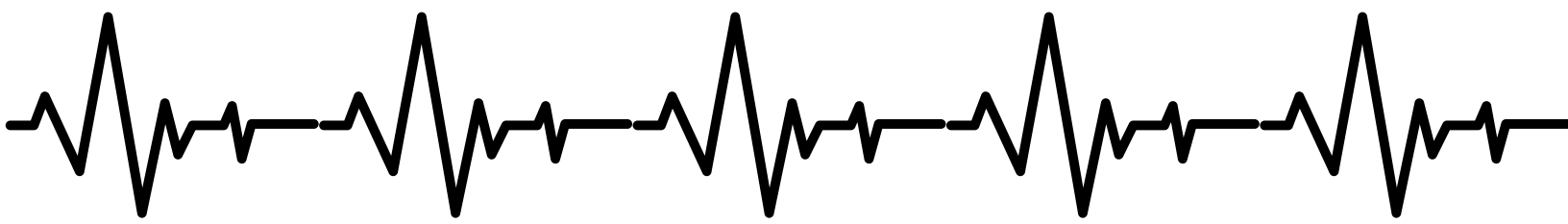
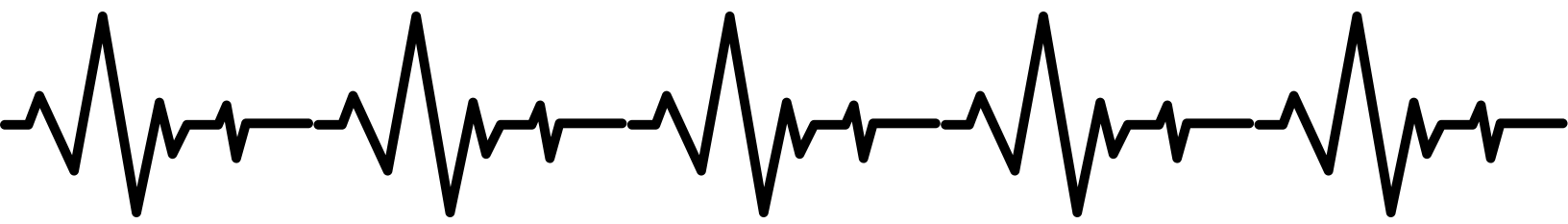




# YOUR HEALTH IS NUMBER ONE

Your Guide to Medical Tests  
and Pregnancy Care

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# 1. Empowering Patients: How to Approach Your Doctor

Patients should feel empowered to:

- **Ask for Explanations:** Request your doctor to explain the purpose and significance of tests.

Example: “What do the results of the Quad Screen tell us about my baby’s development?”

- **Discuss Next Steps:** If results are abnormal, ask about follow-up tests and their purpose.

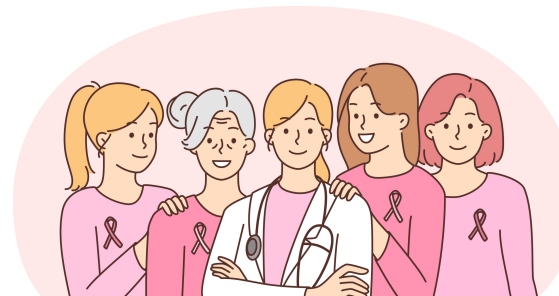
Example: “What additional testing do you recommend based on these results?”

- **Express Concerns:** Share family history or anxieties related to test results.

Example: “Is there a genetic counselor I can consult about these results?”

- **Request Clarity:** Ask for complex medical terms to be simplified.

Example: “Can you explain what this means for me and my baby in plain language?”



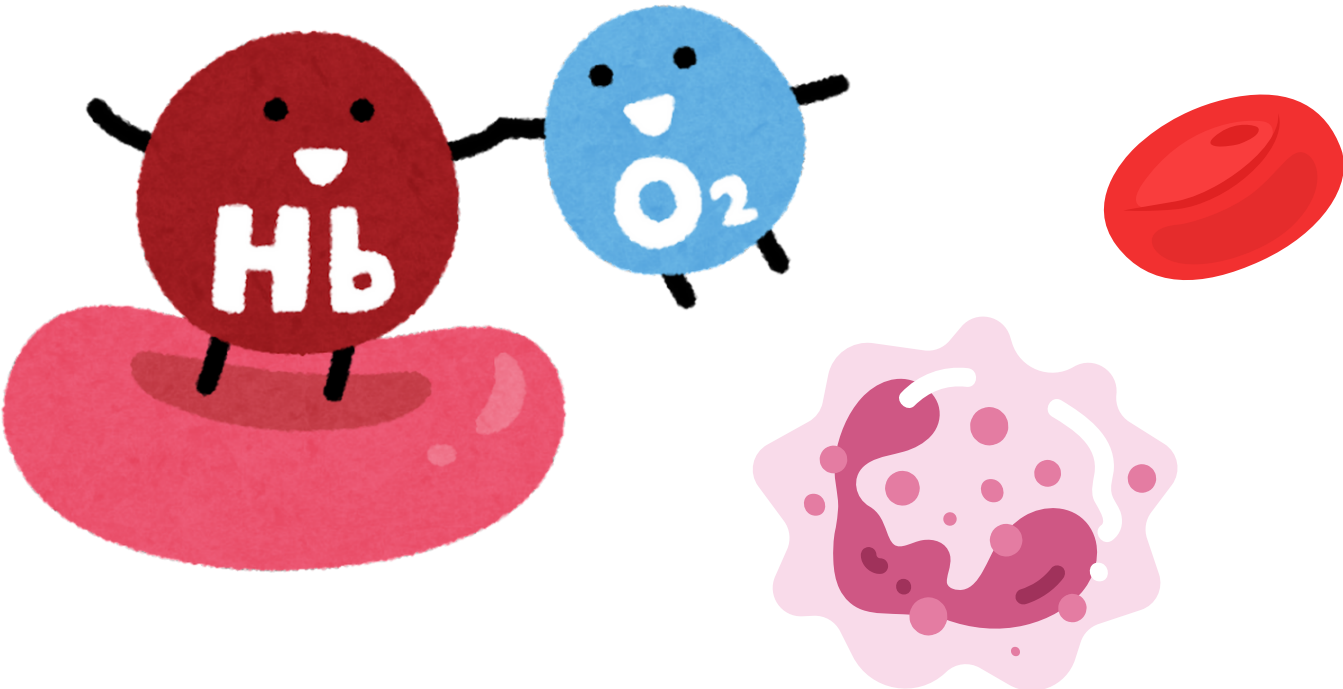
## 2. General Lab Tests: Overview and Purpose

| Test Name                                  | How It's Performed                     | What It Measures                                                             | What the Results Mean                                        | Important Notes                               |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>CBC (Complete Blood Count)</b>          | Blood sample drawn from a vein.        | Counts and sizes of blood cells (red/white cells, hemoglobin, platelets).    | Detects overall health, anemia, and blood abnormalities.     | Follow provider's pre-test instructions.      |
| <b>CMP (Comprehensive Metabolic Panel)</b> | Blood sample drawn from a vein.        | Proteins, enzymes, glucose, electrolytes, kidney and liver function markers. | Provides insights into metabolism and organ health.          | Follow provider's pre-test instructions.      |
| <b>Blood Glucose &amp; HBA1C</b>           | Blood sample drawn from a vein.        | Blood glucose levels (immediate and 2-3 month averages).                     | Assesses blood sugar control and diabetes risk.              | Follow pre-test dietary guidelines.           |
| <b>BMP (Basic Metabolic Panel)</b>         | Blood sample drawn from a vein.        | Electrolytes, kidney function, blood sugar.                                  | Detects dehydration, kidney issues, or metabolic imbalances. | Useful as a health baseline.                  |
| <b>Blood Pressure</b>                      | Measured with an arm cuff and monitor. | Force of blood against artery walls (systolic/diastolic).                    | Indicates cardiovascular health and detects hypertension.    | Routine measurement, especially in pregnancy. |
| <b>Respiratory Rate</b>                    | Counted manually or using a monitor.   | Number of breaths per minute.                                                | Indicates respiratory health; changes may signal distress.   | Combined with oxygen levels for full picture. |

2. General Lab Tests: Overview and Purpose Continued



| Test Name                     | How It's Performed                 | What It Measures                                                                                    | What the Results Mean                                                                   | Important Notes                           |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Hematocrit & Hemoglobin       | Blood sample drawn as part of CBC. | Hemoglobin (for oxygen transport) levels and red blood cell percentage.                             | Identifies anemia (low red blood cell count), dehydration, or oxygen-carrying capacity. | Essential for diagnosing blood disorders. |
| White & Red Blood Cell Counts | Blood sample drawn as part of CBC. | White cells (play a role in immune response) and red cells (transport oxygen throughout your body). | High/low counts indicate infection, inflammation, or anemia (low red blood cell count). | Critical for overall health assessment.   |



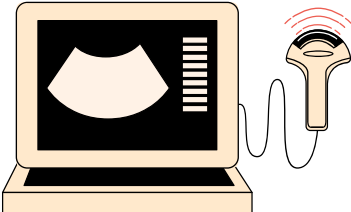
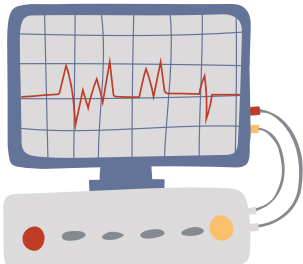
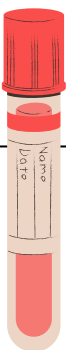
### 3. First Trimester Lab Tests

| Test Name                                    | What It Measures                                                                                                                      | What Results Indicate                                                                                        | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Maternal Serum Tests (hCG, PAPP-A)</b>    | Hormone (substances that regulate your body's functions and are transported in blood) and protein levels to assess chromosomal risks. | Normal levels indicate lower risk; abnormal levels may require further tests.                                | Often part of first-trimester screening for fetal health. Chromosomes are what carry all of our DNA and genetic information!                                                                              |
| <b>Blood Typing &amp; Rh Factor</b>          | Blood type (A, B, AB, O) and Rh factor (a protein found on your blood cells—if you are Rh+ you have this protein!)                    | Rh-negative may require RhoGAM shots to prevent complications.                                               | Important for understanding blood compatibility during pregnancy (to ensure mom and baby are the same type). If your baby is Rh+ and you are Rh- you may make antibodies against your fetus' blood cells. |
| <b>CBC (Complete Blood Count)</b>            | Counts and sizes of blood cells (red/white cells, hemoglobin, platelets).                                                             | Detects overall health, anemia, and blood abnormalities.                                                     | Often part of first-trimester screening for fetal health.                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Rubella Antibodies</b>                    | This measures if you have been infected with rubella which can cause birth defects.                                                   | This test shows if you are immune to rubella or have an infection during your pregnancy.                     | Rubella is a viral infection that causes symptoms like rash and fever. Antibodies are proteins that our immune systems make so that we can better fight off infection in the future.                      |
| <b>Varicella Antibodies (aka chickenpox)</b> | This measures if you have been infected with varicella which can cause pneumonia and birth defects.                                   | If the test is positive, mom will be given antiviral therapy to help fight the infection.                    | The best way to be protected from varicella and rubella is to be vaccinated —this helps both mom and baby stay immune!                                                                                    |
| <b>Hepatitis B Screening</b>                 | Tests if the mother has Hepatitis B which is transmitted through blood or infected bodily fluids.                                     | This allows you healthcare to take proper precautions to minimize transmission to baby during birth!         | If positive, your baby will be given a first dose of the hepatitis B vaccine after birth, followed by a dose of Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG).                                                       |
| <b>Hepatitis C Screening</b>                 | Tests if the mother has Hepatitis C which is transmitted through blood or infected bodily fluids.                                     | Hepatitis C can be cured in some people using antiviral medications.                                         | If you have Hepatitis C, your baby will be tested for the virus at 18 months old. You can still breastfeed with Hepatitis C or B!                                                                         |
| <b>Syphilis Screening</b>                    | Detectes the STI syphilis.                                                                                                            | If positive, the mother can be treated with penicillin and tested again to ensure the treatment worked!      | Syphilis can infect the baby during childbirth, or cause miscarriage, preterm birth or low birth weight.                                                                                                  |
| <b>HIV Screening</b>                         | Detects the presence of antibodies for HIV which indicates that the virus is present.                                                 | Positive results indicate that the mother should receive special care to prevent passing it on to the fetus. | HIV attacks the immune system and can lead to AIDS, which can be prevented with the proper treatment!                                                                                                     |

## 4. Second and Third Trimester Lab Tests

| Test Name                          | What It Measures                                                                                                 | What Results Indicate                                                                                                  | Notes                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Syphilis Screening</b>          | Detectes the STI syphilis.                                                                                       | If positive, the mother can be treated with penicillin and tested again to ensure the treatment worked!                | Syphilis can infect the baby during childbirth, or cause miscarriage, preterm birth or low birth weight.                                               |
| <b>CBC (Complete Blood Count)</b>  | Counts and sizes of blood cells (red/white cells, hemoglobin, platelets).                                        | Detects overall health, anemia, and blood abnormalities.                                                               | Often part of general fetal health assessments.                                                                                                        |
| <b>HIV Screening</b>               | Detects the presence of antibodies for HIV which indicates that the virus is present.                            | Positive results indicate that the mother should receive special care to prevent passing it on to the fetus.           | HIV attacks the immune system and can lead to AIDS, which can be prevented with the proper treatment!                                                  |
| <b>Glucose Testing</b>             | Measures the amount of sugar in your blood.                                                                      | Higher sugar may indicate diabetes. Gestational diabetes may result in preterm labor, preeclampsia or future diabetes. | During the test, you will have a sugary drink and then after a period of time, a blood sample will be taken to measure your blood glucose.             |
| <b>Group B Strep (GBS) Testing</b> | This is a rectovaginal swab that is performed between 36 and 38 weeks of pregnancy to test for the bacteria GBS. | If the test is positive, antibiotics can be provided during delivery.                                                  | GBS is usually found in the intestine or lower genital tracts like the vagina and rectum. It is harmless in adults, but can cause illness in newborns. |

## 5. Common Prenatal Tests: Overview and Procedure

| Test Name                                                                                                       | Purpose                                                                            | Procedure                                             | Timing                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ultrasound</b><br>           | Monitors fetal growth and detects abnormalities in development.                    | A transducer captures images externally or vaginally. | Multiple times throughout pregnancy.                        |
| <b>Fetal Monitoring</b><br>    | Tracks baby's heart rate and contractions.                                         | External belts or internal electrodes.                | During labor or late pregnancy.                             |
| <b>Coagulation Panel</b><br> | Evaluates blood clotting ability (for normal healing).                             | Blood sample drawn for clotting factor analysis.      | If bleeding disorders or DVT suspected.                     |
| <b>Cardiac Biomarkers</b>                                                                                       | Measures substances released into the blood when the heart is stressed or damaged. | Blood sample drawn to evaluate cardiac health.        | Ordered if symptoms like chest pain or fatigue are present. |

## 5. Common Prenatal Tests: Genetic Testing

| Test Name                              | Purpose                                                                                                                 | Procedure                                                                                                                           | Timing                                                 |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CVS (Chorionic Villus Sampling)</b> | Detects genetic and chromosomal abnormalities (contains all of your DNA and genetic makeup!)                            | A thin catheter or needle collects placental tissue. This is a diagnostic tool which determines if a fetus has a condition.         | 10–13 weeks of pregnancy.                              |
| <b>Amniocentesis</b>                   | Diagnoses genetic disorders and assesses lung maturity.                                                                 | A thin needle extracts amniotic fluid under ultrasound guidance. This is a diagnostic tool to determine if a fetus has a condition. | 15–20 weeks or later if needed.                        |
| <b>AFP (Alpha-Fetoprotein Test)</b>    | Protein levels to screen for neural tube (spine, brain etc) defects (e.g., spina bifida) and chromosomal abnormalities. | High: May suggest defects; Low: May suggest Down syndrome or trisomy 18.                                                            | Usually performed in the second trimester.             |
| <b>Cell-Free DNA</b>                   | To check for certain chromosomal disorders.                                                                             | This is done using a sample of maternal blood. This is a screening tool.                                                            | Can be done starting at week 10 and up until delivery. |



The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS

### Cell-Free DNA Prenatal Screening Test

#### How the Test Is Done

#### What is it?

The cell-free DNA prenatal screening test screens for certain conditions caused by an abnormal number of chromosomes. It does not test for all types of chromosomal disorders.

#### When can it be done?

A cell-free DNA test can be done as early as 10 weeks of pregnancy and up until delivery.

#### How is it done?

Some of the genetic material (DNA) from the pregnancy circulates in the pregnant woman's blood. The cell-free DNA test is done on a sample of her blood.

Screening tests are used to estimate whether your fetus is at higher risk or lower risk of having a certain condition.

Diagnostic tests can give a definite answer about whether the fetus has a certain condition. These tests include amniocentesis or chorionic villus sampling (CVS).

A blood sample is taken from the pregnant woman that contains her DNA and DNA from the pregnancy.

The sample is analyzed in a laboratory to check for an abnormal amount of DNA from chromosomes 21, 18, and 13.

#### Major conditions screened for:

- Trisomy\* 21 (Down syndrome)
- Trisomy 18
- Trisomy 13

#### Conditions not screened for:

- Problems that are screened for by ultrasound, such as neural tube defects, heart defects, and abdominal wall defects
- Many other chromosomal and genetic disorders

\*Trisomy means that there are three copies of a particular chromosome instead of the normal two copies. For instance, trisomy 21 means that there are three copies of chromosome 21.

= woman's DNA  
= DNA from the pregnancy

PS1806. This information was designed as an educational aid to patients and sets forth current information and opinions related to women's health. It is not intended as a statement of the standard of care, nor does it comprise all proper treatments or methods of care. It is not a substitute for a treating clinician's independent professional judgment. Please check for updates at www.acog.org to ensure accuracy.

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## 6. Common Questions and Answers



- **Why Should I Attend Regular Appointments?**

Regular checkups monitor your health and the baby's development. They help detect potential complications like high blood pressure or gestational diabetes early.

- **Why Are Prenatal Vitamins Important?**

**Folic Acid:** Reduces neural tube defect risks.

**Iron:** Supports increased blood volume.

**Calcium & Vitamin D:** Strengthens baby's bones and prevents maternal bone loss.

**Iodine:** Supports brain development.

**Omega-3 (DHA):** Promotes brain and eye development.

- **Who Is on My Healthcare Team?**

**Physician (MD or DO):** Oversees pregnancy and delivery.

**Midwife:** Focuses on low-risk pregnancies and natural approaches.

**Doula:** Provides emotional and physical support.

**Nurse Practitioner (NP):** Conducts prenatal checkups and prescribes treatments.

**Lactation Consultant:** Supports breastfeeding techniques.

**Physician Assistant (PA):** Provides care under a doctor's supervision, including exams, prescribing medications, and offering patient education.

**Registered Nurse (RN):** Monitors mother and baby during delivery.

- **I'm on Medicaid. What Does It Cover?**

Medicaid typically covers prenatal visits, necessary lab tests, ultrasounds, labor and delivery, and postpartum care. Check your specific plan for details.

## 7. Do's and Don'ts During Pregnancy



### • DO's •

- Take prenatal vitamins daily.
- Stay hydrated and maintain a balanced diet.
- Attend all prenatal appointments.
- Prioritize mental and physical well-being.



### • DON'Ts •

- Consume raw or undercooked seafood or meats.
- Handle cat litter due to risk of toxoplasmosis.
- Smoke or consume alcohol.
- Engage in high-risk activities or heavy lifting.



## 8. Resources Used + Further Reading

- ACOG: Routine Tests During Pregnancy
- Mayo Clinic
- MedlinePlus
- March of Dimes
- CDC
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- Hepatitis B Foundation
- Stanford Medicine
- Hopkins Medicine: Common Tests During Pregnancy
- Healthline: Blood Tests Overview
- US Career Institute: Medical Assistant Study Guide

**For additional questions or concerns, consult your healthcare provider directly.**

