

## **Screening for blood group and antibodies**

An **easy guide** to screening tests when you are pregnant

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### **Your choice**

This booklet has information about a test you can have.

The test can find out your blood group and look for problems in your blood that could cause harm to your baby. The test can find problems with your baby before he or she is born. The test may not find every problem. If we find a problem, we can give you information or tell you about treatment for you or your baby.

You can choose if you want to have the test.

The test can help you make choices about your care when you are pregnant. The test can show if you or your baby might need extra care. If you are worried, you can talk to your midwife or doctor.

### **About this test**

We only show the results of the test to health staff who need to see them. It is important to tell your midwife if you have any health problems with your blood.

This test takes a small bit of your blood to find out your blood group and to look for any problems in your blood which could harm your baby. This test will be done again when you are 28

weeks pregnant to look for the same problems.

### **Blood group and antibodies**

You will have one of the following blood groups

- Group A
- Group O
- Group B
- Group AB

You will also be Rhesus positive or Rhesus negative. For example, your blood group may be group O Rhesus negative.

The people looking after you during your pregnancy need to know your blood group in case you need a blood transfusion. This usually only happens if you bleed a lot when you have your baby.

Your body makes antibodies to protect you from harm. You may also make antibodies if your baby's blood cells mix with your blood cells. This can damage your baby's blood and make them ill. When your baby is born he or she may need to be treated under a special light, or may need a blood transfusion.

If you are Rhesus negative you will be offered an injection or injections to help protect your baby from antibodies during pregnancy.

You will be given this if you have:

- bleeding from your vagina
- a miscarriage
- an injury to your tummy, or
- a very thin needle put into your tummy for an invasive test (amniocentesis or chorionic villus sampling (CVS)).

You will be offered an injection when you have had your baby if your baby is Rhesus positive.

### **Test results**

You will usually get the results at your next appointment. You may have more blood tests if you have antibodies. If you have antibodies your baby may need special tests before birth.

If you are Rhesus negative you will be offered an injection when you are 28 weeks pregnant to prevent antibodies harming your baby.

The person who does your test will tell you about this.

It is important to tell your midwife if you move home.

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Version 2  
April 2020

