NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Nuchal translucency (NT) measurement of 3.5 millimetres or more

We have given you this leaflet because your baby's nuchal translucency (NT) is 3.5 millimetres (mm) or more. We hope that this leaflet will answer some of your questions. We will offer you an appointment with a specialist doctor or midwife to discuss what this NT measurement might mean for your baby.

What is nuchal translucency (NT)?

Every unborn baby has some fluid under the skin at the back of their neck. This fluid is called nuchal translucency (NT). You can see this fluid on the ultrasound scan early on in your pregnancy. It is part of a baby's normal development in the womb. If your baby has more fluid than usual, it can sometimes be a sign that they have a health problem or condition. This may be a physical problem (for example, a problem with their heart or a viral infection) or a chromosome condition (for example, Down's, Edward's, Patau's or Turner's syndrome).

It is important to remember that 70% (7 in every 10) babies who have an NT measurement between 3.5mm and 4.4mm at an early scan are born healthy and well. This percentage decreases depending on how high the NT measurement is.

Why do you measure NT?

Everyone in England is offered a screening test in pregnancy to give them information on the chance of their baby having chromosomal abnormalities. These include Edward's, Patau's and Down's syndrome.

We measure the NT specifically as part of the 'combined' screening test. This test combines the results of your blood test, other contributing factors, such as your age, with the measurement of the NT from the baby seen on the scan to give you a likelihood ratio of having a baby born with chromosomal conditions.

You may have chosen not to have your baby screened for all conditions, or specifically chosen not to screen for Down's syndrome. That is your choice, and we will respect that choice.

Because an increased NT is also linked with physical problems and other chromosome conditions in your baby, the person doing the scan will tell you if they see more than 3.5mm of fluid at the back of your baby's neck.

What is a normal NT measurement?

There is no normal figure. However, we do know that if early in your pregnancy the NT is 3.5mm or more, there is more chance that your baby will have a physical problem or chromosome condition.

What happens now I know my baby has an increased NT measurement?

We will offer you an appointment with a specialist doctor or midwife to discuss what this may mean for you and your baby. At this appointment, your specialist will give you more information and you will have time to ask them questions. The specialist will probably offer you more tests such as combined test, NIPT (non-invasive prenatal testing), amniocentesis, CVS (chorionic villus sampling) or specialist scans. It will be up to you whether or not to have any more tests. If the tests show there is a problem with your baby's heart, or your baby has a chromosomal condition, you will be supported to make the choice that is right for you and your family.

Although this can be worrying, it is important to remember that many babies whose NT measurement is 3.5mm or more are healthy. An increased NT does not mean there is definitely a problem or that your baby has a chromosomal condition.

Where can I get more information?

If you have any questions while you are waiting for your appointment with a specialist, please contact the screening midwives on **0118 322 7292 / 8507 or 0776 885 0609**.

You may also find it helpful to contact the following charities and support groups.

Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC) www.arc-uk.org	73 Charlotte Street London W1T 4PN Helpline: 020 7713 7486 Text: 07908 683004 Email: info@arc-uk.org	Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC) provides impartial information and individual support to parents while they are going through antenatal screening or when their unborn baby has been diagnosed with an abnormality or condition.
Contact a Family (Contact) www.contact.org.uk	Wenlock Studios, 50-52 Wharf Road, London N1 7EU Helpline: 0808 808 3555 Email: info@cafamily.org.uk	Contact a Family is a charity that provides support, advice and information for families with disabled children, no matter what their condition or disability.

At this time, it is natural to want as much information as possible. Many people choose to look at information on the internet, but please remember that some websites contain information that is not accurate.

Definitions

Nuchal translucency (NT) scan	You will have an NT scan when you are between 11 weeks and 2 days and 14 weeks and 1 day pregnant. The NT scan measures the thickness of the fluid at the back of your baby's neck. An increased amount of fluid may show that your baby has a physical problem or chromosome condition. By combining your age and how many weeks pregnant you are, with information from the scan, your midwife or doctor will estimate your chance of having a

	problem during your pregnancy or your baby having a chromosomal condition.
Chorionic villus sampling (CVS)	CVS is a test carried out during pregnancy that involves taking some tissue from the placenta. CVS is used to detect chromosomal abnormalities such as Down's syndrome or conditions such as sickle-cell diseases. It can also detect certain other genetic conditions. CVS is also a diagnostic test because it gives you a diagnosis. For example, it tells you that your baby does or does not have Down's syndrome.
Chromosome condition	Chromosomes are structures that are found in the nucleus of a cell and are made up of DNA and proteins. Normally humans have 46 chromosomes in each cell, 23 from each parent. Of these, 22 are autosomes and one is a sex chromosome. A chromosome condition is when there is a change in the number or arrangement of the normal 23 pairs of chromosomes, which has an effect on the health of the baby.
Down's syndrome (Trisomy 21 or T21)	Down's syndrome is a condition caused by having an extra chromosome. People with Down's syndrome have three copies of chromosome number 21 instead of two. Down's syndrome affects all population groups. People with the condition usually have: • low muscle tone; • a flatter face; • eyes which slant upward; • small ears; • an unusually wide neck; and • a deep crease across the palm of their hand. Some people may also have heart problems or sight problems or may develop Alzheimer's disease. Although people with Down's syndrome have learning problems, these vary in how severe they are.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Sophie Bailey, Fetal Medicine MW, RBFT Maternity Unit, November 2024
Next review due: November 2026