

16 Week Visit

At this time if you are less than 35 years old, you will be offered a blood test which is a screening test for both Down's Syndrome and spina bifida. There is a great deal of confusion regarding this test. IT IS ONLY A SCREENING TEST. It will not say, "Yes your baby has a defect" or that "No your baby does not have a defect." It will only give a relative risk. Anytime the risk is >1 in 270, the test is considered positive. A positive result means that you are now at as high of a risk as a woman who is 35 or older.

At that point, further genetic testing is recommended. It is only recommended; YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO ANY FURTHER TESTING. Further testing is a genetic amniocentesis. An amniocentesis will say yes or no that you baby does or doesn't have a chromosomal abnormality such as Down's Syndrome. This test is not offered simply to terminate or abort abnormal children. It is done so we can prepare to take care of them. The test also screens for diseases such as spina bifida, which is when the spinal cord is open through the skin, and gastroschisis, which is when the intestines are protruding through the abdominal wall. These pregnancies are followed differently than other pregnancies so these children can be receive appropriate treatment after delivery. We recommend everyone have the blood test even if you plan never to have any other tests done if there is any abnormality.

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN A CONSENT FORM AT THE 16 WEEK VISIT STATING THAT YOU WILL HAVE OR YOU WILL DECLINE THE TEST.

If you are over 35 the physician will have already discussed the various options at previous visits.

* Please review the patient education videos at www.youtube.com/allianceobgyn **prior** to calling the on call physician or the office regarding questions during pregnancy, these will answer the majority of questions.