

Screening tests and scans: week 0–14

During pregnancy you will be offered screening tests to check that you and your baby are healthy.



Screening is your decision – your midwife (or specialist doctor) will give you information and support to help you to decide whether to have screening or not. Talk to them about what's right for you and your baby.

On this page you can find out about:

- the first antenatal blood screen
- HIV screening
- diabetes screening
- screening for Down syndrome and other conditions

- other tests and scans offered during pregnancy.

Screening tests can tell you whether you or your baby are more likely to have a medical condition. Some medical conditions can make you and your baby very sick and others can affect how your baby grows and learns. If screening shows that you or your baby may have a condition, you will be offered further tests that will let you know for certain.

First antenatal blood test

When you first see your midwife (or specialist doctor) during pregnancy you will be offered a blood test. This blood test is free, and it checks:

- your blood group and rhesus factor (if you are rhesus negative, ask your midwife [or specialist doctor] to explain what this means)
- your haemoglobin (the amount of iron in your blood)
- if there are any antibodies that may be harmful to your baby
- if you are immune to rubella
- if you are a hepatitis B carrier
- if you have syphilis
- if you have HIV (see below)
- if you have diabetes or are at risk of developing diabetes (see below).

For more information, see the [Antenatal blood test fact sheet](https://www.nsu.govt.nz/resources/antenatal-blood-test-fact-sheet) (<https://www.nsu.govt.nz/resources/antenatal-blood-test-fact-sheet>) on the National Screening Unit website.

HIV testing

You will be offered HIV screening at the same time as you are offered the first antenatal blood test (see above). HIV screening can also be done at any time during your pregnancy. HIV is a virus that can make you and your baby sick. Most women do not have HIV – but if you do, treatment can help to keep you healthy and well and reduce the chance of HIV passing to your baby during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding.

HIV screening is free and is recommended by the Ministry of Health. Read more on the National Screening Unit website: [HIV testing in pregnancy](http://www.nsu.govt.nz/current-n-su-programmes/antenatal-hiv-screening.aspx) (<http://www.nsu.govt.nz/current-n-su-programmes/antenatal-hiv-screening.aspx>).

Diabetes testing

Diabetes screening is offered twice: as part of the first antenatal blood test (or any time up until you are 20 weeks pregnant) and again when you are 24–28 weeks pregnant. (</your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/pregnancy/weeks-14-30/screening-tests-and-scans-week-14-30>) This screening is to check whether you already have diabetes or if you are at risk of developing diabetes while you are pregnant (gestational diabetes).

Diabetes is when you have too much sugar in your blood, and it can make you sick and affect your baby's growth. If you do already have diabetes or you develop diabetes in pregnancy, you will be offered information, treatment and support – including help to eat well and stay active.

- **Fact sheet: Testing for Diabetes in Pregnancy** (pdf, 233 KB)

(/system/files/documents/topic_sheets/testing_for_diabetes_in_pregnancy.pdf)

Screening for Down syndrome and other conditions

It's your choice to have screening tests to check whether your baby may have Down syndrome or another rarer genetic condition. These conditions happen at the start of pregnancy and can affect your baby's growth and development. Screening can provide information about the chance or likelihood of your baby having one of these conditions. Other tests are needed to find out for sure if your baby has a condition.

The screening depends on how many weeks pregnant you are. If you are less than 14 weeks pregnant, this screening is a blood test from you and a scan of your baby. If you are 14–20 weeks pregnant, this screening is a blood test only. The blood test is free; you may be charged for the scan.

Read more on the National Screening Unit website: [Antenatal screening for Down syndrome and other conditions](http://www.nsu.govt.nz/current-nsu-programmes/antenatal-screening.aspx) (<http://www.nsu.govt.nz/current-nsu-programmes/antenatal-screening.aspx>).

Other tests

Throughout your pregnancy you will be offered other tests to check that you and your baby are healthy and well. This includes regularly checking your blood pressure, urine (wee/mimi) and weight, the size of your 'baby bump' and the baby's heartbeat. These other tests are to check that the baby is growing as expected and you are not showing signs of any problems.

Scans

You will be offered scans in the first 14 weeks of your pregnancy as part of screening for Down syndrome and other conditions and also to check when your baby is due and if you are having twins.

You can choose whether or not to have these scans; you may be charged for them. Talk to your midwife (or specialist doctor) to find out more.

Related websites

[HIV testing in pregnancy: part of antenatal blood tests – HealthEd \(Health Promotion Agency and Ministry of Health\)](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-0)

All pregnant women are being offered an antenatal screening test for HIV/AIDS as part of their routine care. This pamphlet explains the test. Available in [English](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-0), [simplified Chinese](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-simplified-chinese-version), [traditional Chinese](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-traditional-chinese-version), [Hindi](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-hindi-version), [Korean](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-korean-version), [Māori](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-te-reo-m%C4%81ori-version), [Swahili](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-swahili-version), [Samoan](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-s%C4%81moan-version) and [Tongan](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/hiv-testing-pregnancy-part-antenatal-blood-tests-tongan-version).

[Antenatal screening and testing for Down syndrome and other conditions – HealthEd \(Health Promotion Agency and Ministry of Health\)](https://www.healthed.govt.nz/resource/antenatal-screening-and-testing-down-syndrome-and-other-conditions)

Information for pregnant women to help them make informed decisions about optional screening and testing for Down syndrome and other conditions.

[Antenatal screening and diagnostic tests – MAMA Maternity Information Services](http://www.mamamaternity.co.nz/mama-maternity-abc/planning-your-pregnancy-care/antenatal-screening-and-diagnostic-tests/)

Information about screening and testing during pregnancy, including questions to consider before choosing to have any test.

[Screening tests – National Women’s Health \(Auckland District Health Board\)](http://nationalwomenshealth.adhb.govt.nz/services/maternity/pregnancy-advice/screening-tests)

Information about screening tests offered during pregnancy.