

AMNIOCENTESIS

What is amniocentesis?

Amniocentesis is a test that is done during pregnancy in which a small sample of amniotic fluid is removed from around your baby. The test is usually done between 16 and 20 weeks of pregnancy, but can be performed any time after 16 weeks.

Why is amniocentesis needed?

An amniocentesis is often done if a baby has a higher than normal chance of birth defects or other health problems. The following risk factors may increase the chance of birth defects:

- You are 35 or older
- You have a family history of a genetic disorder
- Another test has shown that your baby might have a defect or health problem
- You've had a baby who has a genetic defect or health problem

Amniocentesis may also be done to find out if the baby has an infection or to find out if the baby's lungs have matured.

What happens during the procedure?

You will lie down on the exam table and your doctor will use an abdominal ultrasound machine to find where your baby is in your uterus. Your doctor will then clean your belly with an antiseptic solution. Using the ultrasound picture, he or she will insert a thin needle into your uterus to remove a small amount of amniotic fluid, about 4 teaspoons. Your body will replace the amniotic fluid that is taken. The ultrasound will help the doctor insert the needle as far away from the baby as possible. You will feel a small pinch when the needle is inserted into your skin and some cramping when the needle enters your uterus. The procedure takes about 10 minutes. The fluid will be sent to a lab for testing.

What are the risks?

A very small risk of:

- Miscarriage
- The needle injuring the baby
- Leaking amniotic fluid from your vagina
- Vaginal bleeding
- Infection

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What should I expect during recovery?

You will be able to drive yourself home after this procedure. You may bring someone to drive you if you would like.

- You may experience cramping or a small amount of bleeding right after the procedure
- **Avoid strenuous exercise and heavy lifting for the rest of the day after the procedure**

Call your doctor if you experience:

- Cramping or pain that is not relieved with one dose of Tylenol
- Vaginal bleeding for more than one day after the procedure
- Fluid leaking from your vagina
- Fever (100.4°F or greater) or chills
- Redness or inflammation where the needle was inserted

Office number: **(404) 778-3401**, Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 5PM

- For emergencies after hours calling this number will connect you to the paging operator who will page the OBGYN doctor on call

If your pain becomes severe, or your fever rises above 102°F you should call your physician and go to the emergency room.

How long will it take to get my results?

It should take **1-2 weeks** to get your results. Your doctor or nurse will call you with your results.

Additional instructions:
