

Low pregnancy associated plasma protein A (Low PAPP-A)

Patient information factsheet

- Your recent combined screening blood test at your 12 week scan has shown that you have low PAPP-A levels.
- Do not worry. Most pregnancies with low PAPP-A levels still result in healthy parents and babies with a little extra support from us.
- This leaflet will provide information to explain what low PAPP-A is, and how we will support you during your pregnancy.

What is a PAPP-A?

- PAPP-A stands for 'Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein A'.
- It is a hormone produced by the placenta (the organ that provides oxygen and nutrients to your baby) and is measured during the combined screening test.
- Low PAPP-A levels happen in about 5% of pregnancies. Research evidence shows that low levels can mean the placenta works harder, possibly leading to:
 - Low birth weight babies
 - Pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure and protein in urine (pee))
- These risks are small. However, to ensure that both you and your baby are kept as safe as possible, we will monitor you closely with blood pressure checks and extra growth scans for your baby.

What will this mean for my pregnancy?

- After you receive your screening test results showing that you have low PAPP-A levels, your Community Midwife will contact you to discuss your care plan.
- You will be offered regular growth scans to monitor your baby's growth and the volume of amniotic fluid (water) around the baby.
- We will also continue to check your blood pressure and urine (pee) during your antenatal appointments to identify any changes early.
- We will also recommend that you begin to take Aspirin daily.

Why should I take Aspirin?

- Research evidence shows that taking Aspirin can help to reduce the risk of pre-eclampsia (a complication in pregnancy) as well as reducing the risk of having a small baby.
- Aspirin improves blood flow to the baby, supporting its growth.
- We recommend 150mg of Aspirin daily after your evening meal, starting now until 36 weeks of pregnancy.
- For more information on taking Aspirin in pregnancy, your Midwife can give you our fact sheet or you can access it on our website - <https://bit.ly/AspirinInPregnancy>

Who should not take Aspirin?

If you have any of the following conditions, please discuss taking Aspirin with your Midwife or Doctor

- Asthma
- Stomach ulcers
- Bleeding disorders
- Severe heart failure
- Are under 16 (risk of Reye syndrome)

Is there anything I can do help my baby to grow well?

- Baby's growth has a lot to do with how well the placenta (an organ that provides oxygen and nutrients to the developing baby) is working so there isn't much that you can do to help baby's growth.
- However, if you smoke, it is extremely important that you stop smoking as this affects the placenta and impacts baby's growth. Your Midwife can refer you for help to stop smoking.

Who can I speak to for further information?

- We understand that receiving the news that you have low PAPP levels may be worrying.
- Please be reassured that for most pregnancies, having low PAPP does not mean that there will be a problem for you or baby.
- We hope that extra monitoring will be reassuring for you, but if you have any further questions, please ask your Midwife or Doctor at your next appointment.

Contact our Trust

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern, please contact our Patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on **020 7288 5551** or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet, please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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