**Testing timelines in pregnancy**

Period overdue?

**Home pregnancy tests** can be taken as soon as your period is due. Some tests claim to be accurate from 7-10 days after you had sex.

**Blood tests?**

**Carrier status tests**: These tests find out if mum (or if mum AND dad) carry genetic codes which would place baby at risk of having inherited diseases such as cystic fibrosis, spinal muscular atrophy or fragile X syndrome (there are many more). These only have to be done once for an individual—if we know that you are or are not a carrier, that tells us what we need to know. They are best done BEFORE you fall pregnant, if not, then as soon as possible.

This test IS NOT currently covered by Medicare and costs ~$400.

**The Antenatal Screen** is usually done when you first see your midwife or doctor. If you are seen shortly after your period was due, this will mean you have the tests about 4-6 weeks after your last period. These tests check for infections, Rubella immunity, anaemia, your blood type as well as any other checks that you might need. The cost of these tests IS covered by Medicare.

**The non-invasive prenatal test (NIPT)** primarily tests for the risk of Down Syndrome by looking for fragments of baby’s DNA in mum’s blood. It can be done from 10 weeks. This risk varies with each pregnancy and so testing is recommended for each and every pregnancy. This test is not currently covered by Medicare and costs ~$400.

**First trimester combined screen** is a combination of a blood test and a nuchal translucency scan, which tests for Down Syndrome if a NIPT is not done. Ideally, the blood test is done a few days before the scan, which is best done between 12 and 13 weeks. The cost of these blood tests IS covered by Medicare.

**Follow up bloods**: are done at 24-26 weeks and again at 36 weeks, checking for diabetes, anaemia and blood type reactions. The cost of these tests IS covered by Medicare.

**Ultrasound Scans?** Depends which one. Medicare covers some (NTS, Morphology) or all (most of the other scans) of the cost.

**Dating scan**: If you are unsure when your last period was or if your periods are irregular, a scan can be done from as early as 6 but is best between 7-8 weeks. Earlier than that and we may not see a heartbeat or have enough of a baby to measure so DON’T RUSH.

**Viability scans**: If you have bleeding in pregnancy, we will want to know where the pregnancy is (in case it is growing in your fallopian tubes ie an ectopic pregnancy) and if baby is ok. This is best done from 7-8 weeks, but position can be checked earlier if we are worried.

**Nuchal Translucency Scan (NTS)**: Is a test which can be done from 11 weeks until 13 weeks and 6 days since your last pregnancy. If you are not having a NIPT test, this scan will help to identify the risk of having a child with Down Syndrome as well as confirming how far along in pregnancy you are and if there are obvious structural problems with the baby. To get the most information from this scan, it is best to do it from 12 weeks.

**Morphology Scan**: Best done between 18-20 weeks. The older the baby the more information we will get about their growth and their anatomy.

**Growth and wellness scans**: Are usually only done if problems are identified or anticipated. The timing depends upon if or when a problem or potential problem is identified – it may be done at short notice or may be planned in advance. Ask your midwife or doctor what is right for you.

**Position scans**: Are not routinely done, but if they are done, it is usually from 36 weeks onwards.

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