

# Screening your baby's body

An **easy guide** to screening tests when you are pregnant



## Contents: what is in this booklet

## Page



Your choice

3



About the test

4



Test results

8

## Your choice



This booklet has information about a test you can have.

The test can find problems with your baby before they are born.

If we find a condition we can give you information or tell you about treatment for you or your baby.



The test cannot find every problem.

You can choose if you want to have the test or not.



The test results can help you make choices about your care when you are pregnant.

If you are worried, you can talk to your midwife or doctor.

## About the test

**PRIVATE**

We will keep your test results private.

We only show the results of the test to health staff who need to see them.

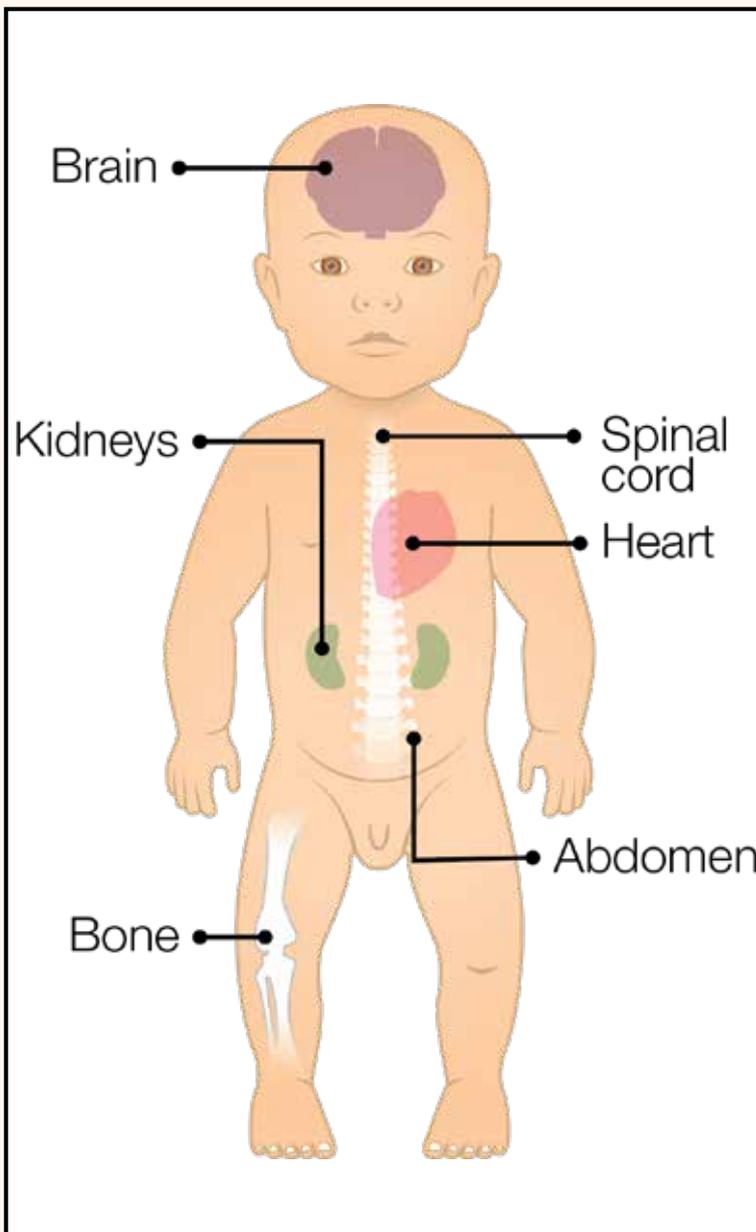


It is important to tell your midwife or health visitor about any health problems you have.



The test is a scan of the baby taken through your tummy. The scan takes a black and white photo of your baby.

You can have the test after 18 weeks of pregnancy but before 21 weeks.



The test looks for problems with your baby's:

- bones
- heart
- brain
- spinal cord
- face
- kidneys
- abdomen (tummy)



This is what happens during the test.

1. You lie on a bed.



2. You pull up your top, and pull your skirt or trousers down to your hips. This will leave your tummy bare.



3. A special gel is put on your tummy, which makes sure the scan works well. The gel is sometimes cold.



4. The scanner is pushed over your tummy. It may feel uncomfortable for you.



The test might find problems with your baby.

You might want someone to come with you for support. This could be your partner, a friend, relative or key worker.

This test will not hurt the baby.



The person doing your test will tell you what they find.



Most tests show babies are healthy.

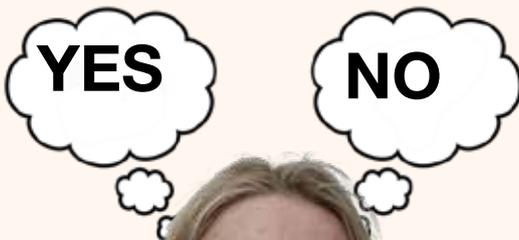


If there is a chance that your baby has a problem we may ask you to see someone else.

They may either test you again or give you another sort of test to find out for sure if there is a problem or not.



This other sort of test has a small chance of making you miscarry. If you miscarry then the baby dies.



You will be able to talk about the test with your midwife.

You can say no to this test.





If there are problems with your baby's body, you can choose to carry on with the pregnancy or have an abortion. If you have an abortion, this means your baby dies.

We will give you support to decide whether or not to have an abortion. This is your decision.



**New home**

It is important to tell your midwife or health visitor if you move home.

**First published:** February 2017

Updated: June 2020

© **Crown copyright 2020**

Re-use of Crown copyright material (excluding logos) is allowed under the terms of the Open Government Licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/) for terms and conditions.

**Images courtesy of:**

Photosymbols – House move (page 9)

**PHE publications gateway number:** GW-1291



Find out how Public Health England and the NHS use and protect your screening information at [www.gov.uk/phe/screening-data](http://www.gov.uk/phe/screening-data).

Public Health England (PHE) created this leaflet on behalf of the NHS