

### What happens after the CVS test?

You will be at the hospital for about 45 min, the test itself takes 15-20 min. We encourage you to bring a companion for support. We suggest that you stay in the clinic for 30 min to let things settle down before making your way home. It is advisable to take things easy for a couple of days, avoiding any heavy lifting or strenuous exercise.

It is usual to have some "spotting" for a few hours after the test. You may feel sore or get some discomfort. This should settle after rest and Paracetamol, which is safe to take in pregnancy. If you have excessive pain, are leaking any fluid or bleeding, or develop a high temperature, please contact your midwife, GP or the local hospital.

### When do I get the results?

A rapid test, that can detect trisomy 21, trisomy 13 and 18 (two other less common chromosome disorders). The results of this test will be reported to you within 72 hours by your Foetal Medicine midwife. The sex chromosome pattern can also be analysed using this test, but this will only be done if there is an indication to do so.

In addition to the rapid test, a more detailed test (known as a karyotype) will be performed on the sample. This test enables us to look at all the chromosomes in greater detail and usually takes about 2 weeks because it involves growing the cells in the lab. We will telephone you with the early result and then send you a written result by post, once the chromosome test is complete. If a problem is discovered, you will be able to discuss this with us.

If you are having a CVS test done for a less common genetic problem, you need to talk to your genetic doctor or counsellor about how long for results, as this varies depending upon the information required and how you wish to be given your results.

Very occasionally the test may not be successful and another test would be needed to give you a full result. However, you will be able to discuss this fully.

### What if the results are abnormal?

If the results show anything abnormal, you would be told what the abnormality is and how this could affect your baby. You would have a chance to discuss the result fully before making any decisions.

### HIV infection

At the moment our existing lab facilities and current Health and Safety law limit the tests we can perform on a sample from women who are known to be HIV positive. There may be a small risk that a CVS test could cause the HIV virus to be passed to the developing baby. In these circumstances it may be possible for women to have an alternative test called an amniocentesis.

We would encourage women who are HIV positive to discuss this with their specialist midwife or doctor to obtain further information.

### For more information:

If you need more advice about any aspect of The CVS Test, you are welcome to contact:

#### Clinical Genetics Department

Northern Scotland (main base Aberdeen)  
Tel: 01224 552120 Fax: 01224 559390

Tayside (main base Dundee)  
Tel: 01382 632035 Fax: 01382 645731

South East Scotland (main base Edinburgh)  
Tel: 0131 651 1012 Fax: 0131 651 1013

West of Scotland (main base Glasgow)  
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### Seen in clinic.....

This leaflet was written by Guy's & St. Thomas' Clinical Genetics Updated by Genetic Interest Group Scotland.

Last updated July 2005

# The Chorionic Villus Sampling Test



Some general information

## Introduction

This leaflet informs you about the Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS) test. This test is not offered as a matter of routine. It is often used to detect specific known genetic disorders and in some instances may be used to detect Down syndrome. In most cases Down syndrome is caused by the presence of an extra chromosome number 21, instead of having the usual 2 copies of chromosome 21, there are 3 copies (also known as trisomy 21).

## Who should consider CVS?

The final decision about having any test in pregnancy is yours and the following women may consider CVS:

1. Women who have had a high-risk result from a nuchal translucency scan (designed to find out the risk of having a baby with Down syndrome).
2. Women who have had a previous pregnancy terminated for a genetic problem.
3. Couples who have had a baby with Down syndrome or those who have a family history of genetic disorders, including some rare inherited diseases.
4. Couples at risk of having a child with a genetic disorder.

Your Age	Risk of Having a Down Syndrome Baby
25	1 in 1500
30	1 in 800
35	1 in 300
38	1 in 180
40	1 in 100
45	1 in 30

## What are the risks of CVS?

CVS has been available for several years. The test can sometimes cause a miscarriage. Scientific literature and our experience indicate that 1 in every 50 women who have the test will miscarry as a result of the procedure. We do not know why this happens.

If you consider this risk too high, an alternative test, with a lower risk of miscarriage is available. This test is called amniocentesis.

## Is the CVS test reliable?

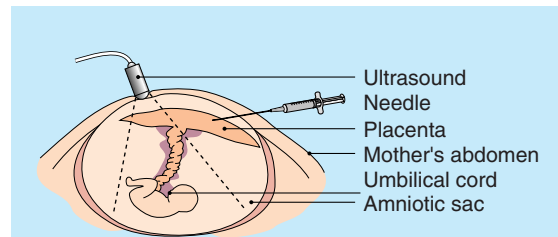
No test is absolutely perfect, the CVS test is very reliable. It fails to give a clear result in less than 1 in 100 cases. If you are having the CVS to test for other genetic disorders, you should discuss the accuracy of the test with your genetic doctor or counsellor.

## When is the CVS test performed?

The test is most safely performed from the 11th week of pregnancy until the end of the 13th week of pregnancy.

## How is the CVS test performed?

Before the test is done, an ultrasound scan is carried out to check your dates and the position of both the baby and the placenta. The test involves taking a sample of the developing placenta (afterbirth) that contains the chorionic villi. These are tiny finger like projections within the placenta that attach it to the uterus (womb).



## What are the benefits of having CVS?

The CVS test can help to reassure you that your baby does not have the specific genetic or chromosome disorder for which your pregnancy is at risk. If the result shows that your baby does have a genetic or chromosome problem, then you will be able to prepare for the arrival of a baby with the condition or make another decision which may include termination of pregnancy.

## There are 2 ways of doing the CVS test:

### 1. Through the abdomen (transabdominal)

The skin over the womb area is cleaned with antiseptic and a local anaesthetic injection is given to numb the area. A fine needle is then passed through the wall of the womb into the placenta. Ultrasound is used to help the doctor to guide the needle into the right place. A small piece of the chorion tissue is removed through the needle and sent to the laboratory for testing.

### 2. Through the neck of the womb (transcervical)

Your vagina is cleaned with antiseptic solution and a pair of fine forceps are then passed through the cervix (neck of the womb). This feels rather like having a smear test. Ultrasound is used to help the doctor to guide the forceps to the right place. A small piece of the chorionic tissue is removed and sent to the laboratory for testing.

With both methods, only a very small piece of the chorionic villi are removed, about the size of a few grains of rice. The size of the sample is checked before the end of the procedure to ensure there is enough tissue to test before it is sent to the lab. The doctor doing the test chooses the method that he/she thinks is the most appropriate for you; this will depend on the position of the placenta (afterbirth).

## Is the CVS test painful?

You will be aware of what is happening, most women describe it as being uncomfortable rather than painful, similar to period pains. Some say that the "transcervical" method feels like having a smear test done or having a coil fitted. If you have the test done through your abdomen, most women say they are aware of a "pushing" feeling and some soreness over the area afterwards. Generally women say the thought of it is worse than the actual test.