

## PAPP-A (Pregnancy associated plasma protein-A)

### What is PAPP-A and how is it detected?

PAPP-A (Pregnancy associated plasma protein-A) is a protein produced by the placenta. It is needed for the implantation process and to maintain a healthy placenta (afterbirth). PAPP-A is a marker measured as part of the combined pregnancy screening blood test which is offered around 11-14 weeks of pregnancy.

### Why does PAPP-A matter in pregnancy?

Low levels of PAPP-A (0.4 MoM and below) are sometimes associated with:

- A lower birth weight baby
- Preterm birth
- Preeclampsia – high blood pressure (hypertension) and protein in your urine (proteinuria)
- Mid trimester miscarriage

If you receive news that you have low PAPP-A levels it only means that there is a small risk of the above. Please be assured that you will receive close surveillance with shared care between your midwife and obstetrician.

### How is low PAPP-A managed?

If you are found to have low PAPP-A levels in your blood this will be discussed with you by your community midwife, an antenatal clinic appointment arranged and you will be offered serial ultrasound scans in the third trimester of your pregnancy. Ultrasound scans will monitor your baby's wellbeing by taking measurements for growth, placental blood flow and the amount of amniotic fluid around your baby. If there are any concerns around your baby's growth or wellbeing this will be referred to a consultant to discuss any further management and planning.

### What can I do to help?

If you smoke it is very important that you stop as it can affect placental function and your baby's growth. Please contact your community midwife who can refer you to smoking cessation; you can also self-refer at One You East Sussex – Visit: [www.oneyoueastsussex.org.uk](http://www.oneyoueastsussex.org.uk)

### Sources of information

If you have any queries or concerns please contact your community midwife or a member of your continuity team.

### Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

### Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team - Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 734731 or by email at: [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## Other formats

**If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.**

**Tel: 0300 131 4500 Email: [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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## Reference

Screening tests for you and your baby Public Health England NHS 2019  
Small-for-Gestational-Age Fetus, Investigation and Management (Green-top Guideline No. 31)  
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists RCOG 2013

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information: Dexter Pascall Consultant Obstetrician, Nicky Roberts Consultant Obstetrician.

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:  
Women and Childrens

Next review date: August 2021  
Responsible clinician/author: Maria Johnson Fetal Wellbeing and Surveillance Specialist  
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