

# Antenatal Testing

## What is antenatal testing?

Antenatal testing is a combination of fetal heart rate monitoring and ultrasound imaging performed prior to delivery.

There are 2 types of testing:

- Twice weekly - Consists of a fluid check by ultrasound every week with fetal heart rate monitoring (non-stress test or NST) twice a week.
- Weekly - Consists of 30 minute ultrasound to look for fetal tone, movement, breathing, and fluid.

## Why and whom do we test?

We test women who have a chronic health problem or a pregnancy-induced health risk that could put her baby at risk for a stillbirth. Some of these health problems are listed below:

- Chronic Health Problems: High blood pressure, thyroid issues, lupus, diabetes, blood disorders, kidney or heart disease, age over 37 years old require antenatal testing.
- Pregnancy Related Health Problems: Gestational diabetes, gestational hypertension, fetal growth problems, too much or too little amniotic fluid, post-term pregnancy beyond 41 weeks, and several other possible complications require antenatal testing.

## When do we test?

Testing time depends on why we are testing, but is often not initiated until 32-34 weeks gestation.

- For advanced maternal age, testing starts at 37 weeks.
- For post-term, testing starts at 41 weeks.