

# **Amniocentesis: What You Need to Know**

## **Highlights**

Amniocentesis is a prenatal diagnostic test used to detect genetic and chromosomal conditions in a baby.

It is only offered to some women during pregnancy based on specific risk factors.

The procedure involves taking a small sample of amniotic fluid for analysis.

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## **Amniocentesis Overview**

### **Criteria for Amniocentesis**

You have received a high-risk result from a prenatal screening test.

You have a family history of genetic or chromosomal conditions.

You are 35 years of age or older at the time of delivery.

Both parents are carriers of a specific genetic disorder.

### **Risks of Amniocentesis**

### **Performing Amniocentesis**

Inserting a fine needle through the abdomen into the uterus.

Extracting a small sample of amniotic fluid that surrounds the baby.

Using ultrasound to ensure the needle does not come into contact with the baby.

### **Specialists Performing Amniocentesis**

### **Post-Procedure Experience**

Vaginal bleeding

Severe abdominal pain

High fever

Unusual vaginal discharge

### **Amniocentesis Results**

### **Cost of Amniocentesis**

### **Questions for Your Doctor**

Why are you recommending this test for me?

What does the procedure involve, and how should I prepare?

When will I receive the results?

How will the results be communicated to me?

What steps should I take to care for myself after the procedure?

## **Additional Information**

### **Tools and Assistance**

**Genetic counseling:** A genetic counselor can provide guidance on the risks and benefits of prenatal testing, including amniocentesis. They can help you understand the implications of the results for both you and your baby.

**Support groups:** Many communities and online forums offer support for women considering or undergoing prenatal diagnostic testing. These groups can provide emotional support and shared experiences.

**Healthcare professionals:** Your obstetrician, midwife, or maternal-fetal medicine specialist can provide ongoing advice and answer questions about the procedure and what to expect. They can also guide you through the decision-making process.

**Printed and online resources:** Many hospitals, clinics, and prenatal care centers provide pamphlets and informational websites about amniocentesis and other prenatal diagnostic options. These resources are designed to provide clear and detailed explanations of the procedure.