

Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS): Understanding the Procedure, Risks, and Alternatives



Highlights

There is a small risk of miscarriage associated with the procedure.
Chorionic villus sampling (CVS) is a prenatal diagnostic test.
It is not routinely offered to all pregnant women.
CVS can help detect genetic or chromosomal conditions in a baby.

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Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS)

Reasons for CVS

Your prenatal screening test indicates a high risk of a genetic or chromosomal condition.

You or your partner are known carriers of a genetic condition.

You have previously had a child with a genetic or chromosomal disorder.

You are 35 years of age or older when your baby is due.

You seek an early and definitive diagnosis of a genetic or chromosomal disorder.

Timing of CVS

CVS Procedure

Preparation for CVS

Ask your healthcare provider if any special preparations are necessary.

You may be advised to arrive with a full bladder for better ultrasound visibility.

You can eat and drink normally unless instructed otherwise.

How CVS is Performed

Transabdominal procedure: A thin needle is inserted through the abdomen into the placenta to collect a sample. This is the most common method.

Transcervical procedure: A thin tube or needle is inserted through the vagina and cervix to reach the placenta.

Risk of Harm to Baby

After the CVS Procedure

Vaginal bleeding

Severe abdominal pain

A high fever
Unusual vaginal discharge

Results of CVS

Preliminary results may be available within 1 to 2 working days.
A full report can take up to 3 weeks.

Interpreting CVS Results

Continuing the pregnancy with additional monitoring and planning for medical care.

Considering the option of terminating the pregnancy based on the findings.
Preparing for potential healthcare needs and support for your baby.

Cost of CVS

Alternatives to CVS

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

Why are you recommending this test?

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

When will I receive the results?

Who will explain the results to me?

What should I do after the procedure to take care of myself?

What are the risks, and how do they compare to other tests?

Can my partner or a support person accompany me?

Tools and Assistance

Genetic counseling: A genetic counselor can help you understand the risks and benefits of CVS, amniocentesis, and other tests, as well as guide you through decision-making processes and provide emotional support.

Prenatal testing centers: Specialized clinics provide prenatal diagnostic services, including CVS and amniocentesis. They can provide comprehensive information and support during the testing process.

Support groups: Connecting with other expectant parents who are undergoing

similar tests can provide emotional support and shared experiences. Many online and in-person support groups exist for parents navigating prenatal testing and genetic conditions.