

Your baby has a Choroid Plexus Cyst

WHAT IS THE CHOROID PLEXUS?

The choroid plexuses are normal structures inside the baby's brain. There are two of them and they produce cerebrospinal fluid (the fluid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord).

What are Choroid Plexus Cysts?

Sometimes small cysts form in one or both choroid plexus when the fetus is developing. This happens in about one out of every 100 normal fetuses, so it is fairly common. In nearly all cases, the cysts disappear during the last three months of pregnancy.

Will having Choroid Plexus Cysts hurt my baby?

No. The cysts themselves are not known to cause any problems in growth or development before or after birth. However, fetuses with a condition called Trisomy 18 are more likely to have choroid plexus cysts than other fetuses.

What is Trisomy 18?

Trisomy 18 happens in one out of every 3,000 births and is caused by an extra chromosome. Babies with Trisomy 18 usually have many birth defects including malformations of the heart, limbs, kidneys and other organs.

Most babies with this disease live less than one year. Those who survive have severe intellectual disability.

What is the chance that my baby has Trisomy 18?

That depends on two factors: the presence or absence of other birth defects in your baby and your age.

First, babies with Trisomy 18 usually have many birth defects. There are usually other findings on ultrasound in these babies besides just the choroid plexus cysts.

Secondly, the risk of having a baby with a chromosome abnormality increases as the mother's age increases. enclosed is a table that summarizes the risk for Trisomy 18 for women of different ages with different rates of abnormalities seen on ultrasound.

MOTHER'S AGE	BACKGROUND RISK	RISK FOR TRISOMY 18		
		Choroid plexus cyst only	Choroid plexus cyst + 1 other finding	Choroid plexus cyst + 2 or more other findings
20-24	1/4,500	1/2,950	1/225	1/5
25-29	1/3,600	1/2,300	1/175	1/4
30-34	1/2,000	1/1,300	1/100	1/3
35-40	1/750	1/470	1/35	<1/2
41-44	1/200	1/100	1/10	<1/2

Snijders, RJ, Shawna, L, Nicolaidis, KH, Prenatal Diagnosis Dec 1994; 14(12)1119-1127

How can I find out if my baby has Trisomy 18?

A test called a genetic amniocentesis can be done to collect some of the fluid from around your fetus. This fluid has skin cells in it that have sloughed off the fetus.

The fluid can be sent to a laboratory where the skin cells can be studied for their chromosome content. Babies with Trisomy 18 have an extra number 18 chromosome in each cell. The result of this test takes about 12 days and is greater than 99 percent accurate.

Is amniocentesis a risky procedure?

There is a small risk involved in amniocentesis. Occasionally, the test may lead to a miscarriage or infection. The chance of a serious complication from amniocentesis is approximately one in 500.

IN SUMMARY

The finding of choroid plexus cysts in your fetus does not mean that your baby has a problem. Although the risk for Trisomy 18 is increased over your background risk, the overall risk for this condition is still small. You may wish to have testing to find out if your fetus has Trisomy 18 or not.

Or, you may feel that the risk for Trisomy 18 is still so small that you do not want to have any more tests.

If you have further questions, please feel free to call our office at (515) 643-6888 or toll free at (877) 415-7447.



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