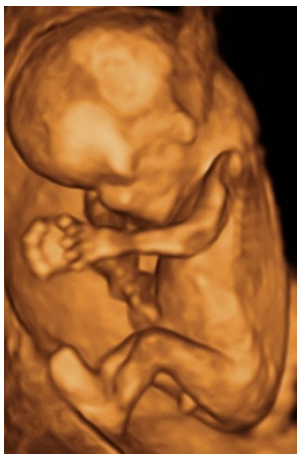
TARA

Imaging for Women

Nuchal Translucency

1 Tyler St, Campbelltown

For appointments please call 46256585



What is the first trimester nuchal translucency and serum screening programme?

The first trimester nuchal translucency is a screening programme to find out your chance of having a baby with Down's syndrome. The test has 2 parts;

1. An ultrasound done to measure the depth of fluid at the baby's neck called nuchal translucency. (pronounced as 'new-cal').
2. A special blood test that measures the levels of two hormones- free beta HCG and PAAP-A.

The result is combined and given to you in a number like 1 in a 1000.

What is down's syndrome?

Down syndrome is also known as trisomy 21. It occurs when there is an extra or third copy of chromosome number 21 in body's cells. This changes the normal genetic make up of 46xx or 46xy to 47xx, +21 or 47xy, +21. The characteristics may include intellectual delay, distinct facial features and problems with the heart and digestive system.

Who can do this test?

The ultrasound specialists and sonographers who are accredited to use the Fetal Medicine Foundation database (LONDON) are allowed to perform the test. At TARA, both the the specialists and the sonographers are accredited to perform the test.

When is the test done?

The ultrasound is done between 11½ weeks to 13½ weeks gestation. The blood test can be done between 10 - 14 weeks.

How accurate are the results?

If you have both the ultrasound and the blood test about 90% of the babies with Down's syndrome will have an increased risk result. Around 10% of the babies with Down's can be missed. About 5% of women scanned will have an increased risk. Most of these babies will be normal. There are further tests required to be sure the baby does in fact have down's syndrome. This test does not find all abnormalities. A morphology scan at 18 weeks will look for other problems once the baby is bigger.

Can I just have the ultrasound?

The results of the ultrasound alone are 75% accurate which means that 75% of babies with Down syndrome will receive an increased risk result. About 25% of the babies will be missed.

If the test does not diagnose the condition why should I have it?

The diagnostic tests are invasive and carry a risk of miscarriage with them. The nuchal programme gives us a chance to identify babies at risk so that unnecessary invasive tests are not performed.

When will my results be available?

At TARA, we have a specialist obstetrician and Gynaecologist on site for consultation at all times. The results and your pictures will be available immediately after the test as long as you have your blood test at least 4 days before the scan.

What will the results tell me?

Most babies have a less than 1 in 300 chance of having a baby with Down's syndrome which is a LOW RISK result. A result that gives you a chance higher than 1in 300 is a INCREASED risk result. This does not mean that your baby has Down syndrome definitely. If your baby is in the increased risk group the specialist will discuss the options of diagnostic tests.

What if there is a problem?

The specialist will discuss your results and options of further testing at the consultation.

Does everyone have to have the test?

Everyone has a choice to have the test. Some women will chose not to have the test. However, at TARA we combine the nuchal translucency test with an anatomy scan to give accurate dates. This gives you an opportunity to see your baby when it is 4.5 cm to about 8 cm long. It is reassuring to see normal anatomy this early and gives you a chance to think of options and available therapy if a problem is identified. Other conditions that can be identified include twins and chromosome problems Trisomy 13 and 18.