

Testing for thyroid stimulating antibodies

Information for patients, parents and guardians

We've given you this factsheet because your baby will need to have some follow-up blood tests before you take them home.

We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have.

Why does my baby need to have follow-up tests?

If you have (or have previously had) a thyroid condition, this can affect your baby.

Antibodies known as 'thyroid stimulating antibodies' can cross the placenta and can occasionally affect your baby's thyroid.

This means your baby may be at risk of hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid) or hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid).

It is rare for babies to be affected by maternal thyroid conditions but it is important to pick this up early. Because of this, we will need to test your baby for thyroid stimulating antibodies.

What follow-up tests will my baby need?

When your baby is born, we will send the cord blood to be tested for thyroid stimulating antibodies.

Your baby will also need to have some blood tests.

We will need to observe your baby for at least 24 hours on the postnatal ward before you take them home. We will monitor their temperature, heart rate, breathing rate and feeding.

Your baby will then have further blood tests in the Butterfly Clinic in the children's outpatient department at Southampton General Hospital on day 3 to 5 and day 10 to 14.

If the thyroid stimulating antibody test result is negative and thyroid function test results are normal, your baby will not need to have any further blood tests or follow-up care.

If the thyroid stimulating antibody test is positive, your baby will need to have a review appointment at 4 weeks and another one at 2 to 3 months old.

If symptoms develop, we will repeat the thyroid function blood test and your baby will be seen by a paediatrician (specialist children's doctor).

Symptoms and signs to look out for

Call the neonatal home team or your GP if your baby develops any of these symptoms:

- irritability
- increased appetite
- poor weight gain
- feeding difficulties
- diarrhoea
- flushing
- sweating
- breathing fast
- goitre (neck swelling)
- warm moist skin

After leaving hospital

After you leave hospital, the neonatal home team will provide follow-up care for your baby.

They will review your baby either at home or by telephone, and take their thyroid blood tests

Contact us

Neonatal home team: **07766 994 816**

Useful links

NHS UK website

www.nhs.uk

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**

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