

# Helpful Tests For You And Your Baby

Because you're pregnant, you want to take good care of yourself and the baby growing inside of you. That includes getting health tests early in your pregnancy, perhaps as soon as your first visit. Here are some of the blood tests that doctors, midwives, and nurses recommend for all pregnant women:

Test	What is it? Why is it important?
Blood Type and Rh Factor	A person's blood type is either A, B, AB, or O. Every pregnant woman should know her blood type in case she needs blood when she is having her baby. Rh factor is either "negative" or "positive." If a mother is Rh negative and her baby is Rh positive, the mother's body can make proteins that may harm the baby's red blood cells. A woman who is Rh negative may need a special treatment to protect her baby.
CBC	CBC is a complete blood count. This test shows the kinds and numbers of cells in the blood. It gives general health information.
Hepatitis B	Hepatitis B is a virus that infects the liver. If a pregnant woman has hepatitis B, in most cases, her baby can get treatment at birth to prevent infection. There are also other forms of hepatitis. A pregnant woman may get tested for them, too.
HIV	HIV is a virus that weakens the body's defense against disease and causes AIDS. If a woman has HIV, she can pass it to her baby during pregnancy, during labor, or through breastfeeding. If an HIV infection is found before a woman gives birth, doctors can treat her with drugs that fight HIV. These drugs greatly reduce the risk of the baby being infected. The earlier in pregnancy that treatment begins, the smaller the chance that the baby will be infected with HIV.
Rubella (German Measles) Immunity	Rubella is a viral disease that causes a fever and rash. Rubella is usually mild in children and adults, but it is very contagious. If a pregnant woman gets rubella, it can cause severe problems for her baby. Many women have had a vaccine and are immune to (cannot get) rubella. Pregnant women who are not immune can get the vaccine after their baby is born to keep them from getting rubella in the future.
Syphilis	Syphilis is a bacterial disease. It may not cause symptoms at first, but can progress and harm many parts of the body. A pregnant woman who has syphilis can pass it to her baby. Treating syphilis early in the pregnancy is the best way to keep the baby from getting it. If left untreated, syphilis can cause serious health problems for the baby and the mother.

Your doctor, midwife, or nurse may also suggest other tests based on your family history and the routine in his or her practice. If you have questions about any of the tests, feel free to ask.



**ONE TEST  
TWO LIVES**

Get tested for HIV. For you and baby.™

### To Learn More

You can also learn more about tests in pregnancy by visiting The National Women's Health Information Center at <http://www.4woman.gov> or WebMD at <http://www.webmd.com>.

Your doctor, midwife, or nurse may recommend other Web sites, books, or magazines.

If you would like information on HIV testing, visit the National HIV Testing Resources Web site at <http://www.hivtest.org>.

You also can contact CDC-INFO by e-mail at [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) or by phone at 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) in English, en Español, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The number for callers with TTY equipment is 1-888-232-6348. Your call is free and private.

