

What is a Nuchal Translucency ultrasound?

A Nuchal Translucency (NT) ultrasound measures a fluid space at the back of your baby's neck. The NT scan is done between 11 and just under 14 weeks of pregnancy.

When the result of the NT ultrasound is combined with the results of two blood tests (one taken between 9 and just under 14 weeks of pregnancy, and the other taken between 15 and just under 21 weeks of pregnancy), it is called an integrated prenatal screen (IPS). The combination of the NT ultrasound and the two blood tests tell you the chance of your baby having Down syndrome, Trisomy 18, or an open neural tube defect. Your health care provider will have your screen result within 10 days after the second blood test.

NT ultrasound is one part of an Integrated Prenatal Screening (IPS) which can be done in women carrying a single or twin pregnancy. NT ultrasound alone may be done in women carrying triplets or more.

How is it done?

The main part of an NT ultrasound involves an [ultrasound scan](#).

To accurately date your pregnancy, the sonographer will measure your baby from the top of its head to the bottom of the spine (called a Crown Rump Length measurement). The sonographer will then measure the width of the NT which is obtained at the back of the fetal neck area. The skin will appear as a white line, and the fluid under the skin will look black.

Regardless of whether a woman has an NT ultrasound in her first trimester, a detailed ultrasound in the 2nd trimester looking at the anatomy of the whole fetus is recommended for all pregnancies. The detailed ultrasound occurs at 18-20 weeks and can be arranged by your health care provider.