

Low Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein-A

You have been found to have low Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein-A (PAPP-A). This is measured as part of your combined antenatal screening blood test.

What is PAPP-A?

Pregnancy-associated plasma protein A (PAPP-A) is a hormone produced by the placenta. Low levels of PAPP-A are defined as less than 0.415 MoM. MoM stands for multiple of the median, or average of everyone's results. A MoM of 1.00 is average; higher than 1.00 is above average; and lower than 1.00 is below average.

What does low PAPP-A mean?

Low PAPP – A is not uncommon and most babies having low PAPP-A during pregnancy, will be born at the expected time and have a normal birth weight. However, some studies have shown low levels of PAPP-A may be associated with;

- A lower birth weight baby (due to the placenta not working as well)
- Having an early birth (preterm, before 37 weeks)
- An increased chance of developing pre-eclampsia

What happens next?

National guidelines suggest that extra scans should be considered to monitor the growth of babies when a low PAPP-A level has been found. Therefore, we would like to offer you a uterine artery doppler scan between 22-24 weeks which will check the blood flow to the placenta. This is an additional scan to your 20-week anomaly scan. We will also arrange for you to have growth scans at 32, 35 and 38 weeks gestation. If these scans identify any issues, the Fetal Medicine Team will put a plan in place with you.

What can I do to help?

We recommend that you take a daily dose of aspirin 150mg, every evening throughout your pregnancy. There is evidence that taking low dose aspirin once a day can help increase the function and blood flow of your placenta. Liverpool Women's Hospital routinely requests your GP to provide you with a prescription for aspirin. However, it can also be purchased at your local pharmacy.

It is also important that you keep all your routine community midwife appointments, so the health and wellbeing of you and your baby can be monitored throughout your pregnancy. Monitoring your baby's movements is also an effective way to check your baby's wellbeing. If your baby's movements concern you; slow down, change pattern or stop, you must contact the Maternity Assessment Unit immediately.

Please see QR code for information on baby's movements; Tommy's Fetal Movements leaflet- [Baby movements in pregnancy | Tommy's \(tommys.org\)](https://www.tommys.org/pregnancy/baby-movements)



As smoking can affect the placenta and growth of the baby, we also recommend all pregnant women stop smoking. You can speak to your midwife for referral to our smoking cessation midwife who can provide you with help and support, including the offer of nicotine replacement therapies.

Who can I speak with if I need further information?

If you have any questions you can contact:

Antenatal Screening Office – 0151 702 4106 / 0151 708 9988 (ext 1083)

Screening Team Mobile – 07971 527 341

Maternity Assessment Unit – 0151 702 4413

Fetal Medicine Unit – 0151 702 4072

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