

Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS)

What is chorionic villus sampling?

Chorionic [KOHR-ee-on-ik] **villus** [VIL-uh-s] **sampling**—which is also called **CVS**—is a test usually performed between 10 and 13 weeks of pregnancy. It involves testing a sample of the **placenta**, the tissue that joins you and your developing baby.

CVS is a very accurate way to determine if your pregnancy is affected by a genetic disorder, such as Down syndrome, trisomy 18, or cystic fibrosis.

Why do I need CVS?

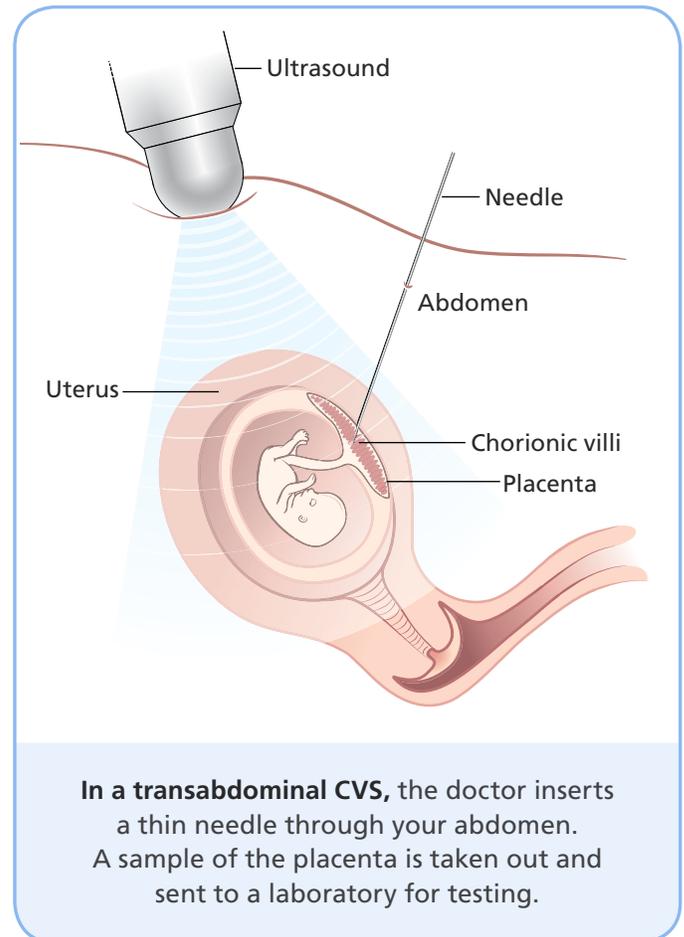
As with all prenatal tests, CVS is optional. Women who choose CVS are often those who:

- Are older at the time of the pregnancy as the chance of having a genetic disorder affect your pregnancy increases with age
- Have a family history of a disorder that can be detected by CVS
- Have had a prenatal test suggesting an increased chance of having a genetic disorder
- Want added peace of mind about their pregnancy

Talking to your doctor or a **genetic counselor** can help you decide whether CVS is right for you and your baby. A genetic counselor is a medical professional who helps patients learn more about the chances of having a genetic disorder. The counselor can also discuss other testing options with you.

How is CVS done?

CVS requires going into your uterus (womb) to get a sample of the placenta. Intermountain Healthcare doctors use a procedure called **transabdominal** [trans-ab-DOM-uh-nl] **CVS**. Some doctors use a procedure called **transcervical** [trans-SUR-vi-kuhl] **CVS**.



In a transabdominal CVS, a doctor uses an ultrasound to carefully guide a thin needle through your abdomen (belly) to the placenta. In a transcervical CVS, a doctor places the needle through your vagina and cervix. The needle is used to remove cells from a part of the placenta called the **chorionic villi**. The needle is then taken out, and the sample is sent to a laboratory for testing.

CVS takes 10 minutes or less to perform and is done as an outpatient procedure. This means the procedure will happen at a hospital or clinic, but you won't be hospitalized.

What happens before CVS?

Before the CVS procedure, you'll:

- **Discuss the test with your doctor or genetic counselor.** Topics for discussion may include:
 - **Your chance of having a child with a genetic disorder.** Your doctor and genetic counselor can help evaluate this based on your age, family history, ethnic group, and other factors.
 - **Possible benefits, risks, and alternatives** that may apply to your situation.
 - **Which genetic disorders your CVS should test.** Testing for some disorders—such as Down syndrome—is routinely done. Tests for some other disorders must be specifically ordered.
 - **The meaning of different possible test results.** CVS test results are accurate in telling more than 99 out of 100 people if their pregnancy is affected by a genetic disorder. **Note that a normal result doesn't guarantee that a baby will be free of all health problems.**
- **Have your blood type tested.** If you have a certain blood type—called **Rh negative**—you may need an injection after this or any other procedure during pregnancy.
- **Drink plenty of fluid.** On the day of your procedure, you should arrive at the hospital or clinic with a full bladder.

What happens after CVS?

After the CVS procedure, you:

- **Can return to normal activities.**
- **May have mild cramping or spotting**—a small amount of bleeding from the vagina—for 1 day. This is normal. Most women have no other symptoms.
- **Should not take antibiotics for 24 hours.** Only take one dose of acetaminophen (Tylenol®) if you need it to relieve cramping.
- **Will receive test results in about 7 days.** You can discuss the results with your doctor or genetic counselor. Depending on the results, your doctor may suggest additional testing.



When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you have any:

- Spotting that becomes heavy bleeding
- Mild cramping that becomes severe
- Flu-like symptoms (aches, chills) or a fever of 100° F or higher

If you have any of these symptoms and can't reach your doctor, go to the nearest hospital or emergency room.

| Possible benefits | Risks and possible complications | Alternatives |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly accurate results. Results are accurate in more than 99 out of 100 people. • Early results. Results are usually available 7 days after the procedure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscarriage (pregnancy loss). With an experienced doctor, this happens in less than 1 out of 300 to 500 procedures. • Leg or arm deformities. This is only possible when CVS is done earlier than 10 weeks of pregnancy. For later procedures, this risk is not greater than for all pregnancies. • Mild cramping and spotting. • No results. You may not get results from CVS. This can happen when a sample of the placenta can't be obtained, or if the testing fails. • Inaccurate results. CVS results are inaccurate in less than 1 out of 100 people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No prenatal testing • Other prenatal testing • Genetic testing of you and your partner to determine the risk of passing on a genetic disorder • Other blood testing • Ultrasound |

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