



PATIENT INFORMATION

# Afp4<sup>®</sup> and AFP Tetra

Second trimester screening  
for birth defects



**labcorp**



## How are AFP Tetra and Afp4<sup>®</sup> performed?

**Using a small sample of blood drawn from your arm, the test measures the levels of certain proteins in your blood.** These proteins are made by the developing baby and the placenta and are found in every pregnant patient's blood. However, when a fetus is at risk for Down syndrome, trisomy 18 or spina bifida, the amount of these proteins may be affected.

### **Your specific test result can be affected by:**

- Exactly how far along you are in your pregnancy on the day that the blood sample is taken
- Your weight and age
- Whether you have Type 1 diabetes or take certain types of medications
- Whether a close relative has an open neural tube defect

# What is maternal serum screening?

Maternal serum screening is a blood test offered to identify pregnancies at increased risk of Down syndrome, trisomy 18 or an open neural tube defect such as open spina bifida.

# What is AFP screening?

AFP, sometimes called AFP Tetra, Afp4® or “quad screen”, is a serum screening assay offered during the second trimester of pregnancy (15-22 weeks). It requires a blood sample and measures the levels of four proteins in your blood: alpha-fetoprotein (AFP), human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), unconjugated estriol (uE3) and dimeric inhibin A (DIA).



# What do my AFP Tetra or Afp4 results mean?

It is important to understand that a screening test does not provide a diagnosis; rather, it predicts the likelihood of a condition being present. Afp4 or AFP Tetra can only tell you if there is an increased or decreased chance of your baby having Down syndrome, trisomy 18 or an open neural tube defect. There are two types of screening test results.

## **Screen negative**

If the results show measurements within the expected range, the chance of having a baby with Down syndrome, trisomy 18 or an open neural tube defect is decreased. This is called a “screen negative” result. In rare instances, screening will not detect these conditions as it cannot detect all high-risk pregnancies.

## **Screen positive**

If the results show measurements outside the expected range, there is an increased chance of having a baby with Down syndrome, trisomy 18 or an open neural tube defect. This is called a “screen positive” result. If your result is screen positive, your doctor may refer you to a genetic counselor and/or offer diagnostic testing to determine if your baby is affected by one of these conditions.

# If I screen positive, what happens next?

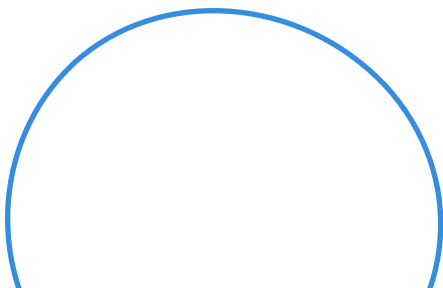
Together, you and your doctor can discuss follow-up options. If your screening test is positive, your doctor may recommend one or more of the following:

- Genetic counseling
- Ultrasound
- Amniocentesis



Pregnancy is a dynamic time, and you want answers. From carrier screening to advanced diagnostic testing, Labcorp delivers important insights and support during your entire pregnancy and beyond.

Ask what tests and screenings your physician plans to order and when. Most prenatal tests are covered by insurance.<sup>1</sup> Contact your insurance provider to find out specifics about what is covered by your individual plan.



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### Educational Videos

View short videos on genetic testing:  
[womenshealth.labcorp.com/videos](https://womenshealth.labcorp.com/videos)

### Additional resources:

Frequently Asked Questions by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG): [acog.org/womens-health/faqs/having-a-baby](https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/having-a-baby)

### References

1. Everyday Health Group. Prenatal Testing During Pregnancy. Whattoexpect.com. Accessed December 20, 2023. <https://www.whattoexpect.com/pregnancy/pregnancy-health/prenatal-testing/>

