

Further information

How to contact us:

Maternity Unit
Watford General Hospital
West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Vicarage Road
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD18 0HB

Tel: 01923 244366

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 187** or email westherts.pals@nhs.net



Author	Patience Chandiwana
Department	Women and Childrens Services
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**West Hertfordshire
Hospitals**
NHS Trust



A guide to...

Uterine Artery Doppler Ultrasound Measurements

Patient information

Womens and Childrens Services

Watford General Hospital

Hemel Hempstead Hospital

St Albans City Hospital

What is uterine artery doppler ultrasound measurement?

Uterine arteries are the vessels that carry blood to your womb (uterus). Every woman has two uterine arteries on one on each side of the womb. These arteries supply the blood flow to the womb, which then feeds the placenta. If there is a good blood flow in these arteries, the placenta develops normally helping the baby to grow in a healthy way inside the womb.

A uterine artery doppler measurement is used to check the blood flow of the uterine arteries. The flow of blood in the vessels can inform us as to whether your baby will grow to its full potential and the likelihood of developing pre-eclampsia (a blood pressure condition in pregnancy). It can be carried out during an ultrasound scan around 20 - 24 weeks. You will be offered a uterine artery doppler measurement scan if you are more at risk of having a small baby or developing pre-eclampsia. The doppler measurement uses sound waves to check if the blood is flowing easily (low resistance) or whether it is having to work harder (raised resistance).

What do the results mean?

A low resistance measurement means that the blood flow to your baby is normal. A normal result also indicates that you are less likely to develop pre-eclampsia. You will then be offered growth scans every four weeks in your pregnancy to monitor your baby's growth.

A raised resistance measurement suggests that there is more chance that your baby will not grow as well as expected, and an increased risk that you might develop pre-eclampsia. **It is important to understand that this does not mean that this will happen, only that you are at increased risk.** You will be offered additional monitoring, scans, hospital appointments and midwife appointments during your pregnancy. That means that if problems do arise they can be picked up as early as possible.

Is there anything I can do to help my baby to grow well?

If you smoke, it is extremely important that you stop. Smoking can seriously affect the function of the placenta and your baby's growth.

Please ask your midwife to refer you to Hertfordshire Health Improvement Service, or you can contact them directly:

0800 3893998

01442 453071

or Text Smokefree to 80818

Monitoring your baby's movements is a good way for you to check your baby's wellbeing.

Is there any treatment?

This is not an illness; hence treatment is not required.

Will future pregnancies be similar?

The presence of a high resistance flow pattern in this pregnancy does not increase the chances of having this again in subsequent pregnancies.

Who can I speak with if I need further information?

Receiving the news of having extra test may cause anxiety but please be assured that the majority of babies will have normal growth. You are welcome to contact your community midwife or to ask your obstetrician if you have any queries or concerns.