

Diagnostic Tests

Prenatal diagnostic tests can give you a yes or no answer about [birth defects](#) before the developing baby is born. But they have some risks. You have other testing options as well.

The Only Way To Be Sure

Diagnostic tests are the only way to know for sure whether the baby is affected with certain conditions. The two main diagnostic tests, [CVS](#) and [amniocentesis](#), can find chromosome abnormalities like [Down Syndrome](#).

Amniocentesis can also find conditions like [Spina Bifida](#).

Small Risks

Any diagnostic test for birth defects comes with some risk to the baby or the pregnant mother. However, the risks are small – less than one in 500 tests result in pregnancy loss.

Timing of Diagnosis

For women who get a [California screening test](#) that says “[screen positive](#),” the Program will cover a diagnostic test. CVS is offered around 11 to 15 weeks of pregnancy. Amniocentesis is offered from 15 to 24 weeks.

Diagnostic tests are good options for women who want to know for sure about birth defects. Some women choose diagnostic tests instead of screening tests. Diagnostic tests are also good options for women who have a screening test that says “screen positive.” A [genetic counselor](#) can help you see if a diagnostic test is right for you.