

Antenatal screening

Early and Mid-Pregnancy Ultrasound Scan Explained

You will be offered two scans at the booking visit with the midwife: the first in early pregnancy and the second scan at around 18-20 weeks of pregnancy, this is in line with national guidance.

At your booking visit with your midwife, the ultrasound screening information in 'Screening Tests for you and your baby' (you can follow the link for that in the antenatal screening page, in the appointment letter you are sent and on your 'My pregnancy notes' app) will be discussed and you will be offered a Nuchal Translucency (NT) scan or dating scan depending on whether or not you have opted for the 1st trimester screening.

If you have opted for 1st trimester screening (which includes screening for Down's, Edward's and Patau's syndromes) and will be within the pregnancy timeline (11+2 to 14+1 weeks of pregnancy), you will be booked onto an NT scan slot and an NT measurement will be taken during this scan. After the scan you will have bloods taken by the phlebotomist and these will be sent to the NHS screening laboratory for analysis (see screening information on antenatal screening page)

If at the time of the NT scan, either you are found to be over 14 weeks pregnant or your baby is not lying in a good position, it may not be possible to measure nuchal translucency. If this happens, we will only be able to offer you the quadruple screening for Downs syndrome instead. This can be done from 14+2 weeks up to 20+6 weeks of pregnancy.

If you do not wish to have 1st trimester or 2nd trimester screening, the NT will not be measured and you will have a dating scan only. This can be performed from 8 weeks of pregnancy.

You will also be offered an anomaly scan for from 18+6 to 20+6 weeks of pregnancy at this visit. This scan will look for 11 specific conditions and you can read more about this in '[Screening tests for you and your baby](#)'. If any abnormalities are suspected on either of your scans, you will be offered a further scan with a fetal medicine specialist. If an abnormality is confirmed, you may be offered further tests. You will also be offered counselling and support by specially trained midwives and doctors.

Please note that not all abnormalities may be detected by scanning.