

Patient information

Estimated fetal weight / fetal measurement on or below the 3rd centile at anomaly scan

You have received this information leaflet as, during your ultrasound examination, a fetal biometry measurement (either the head circumference, abdominal circumference, femur length or overall estimated fetal weight), is measuring on or below the 3rd centile.

What does this mean?

The main purpose of the fetal anomaly scan is to look thoroughly at aspects of your baby's anatomy. We also carry out measurements of your baby including head circumference, abdominal circumference, femur length and overall estimated fetal weight. These measurements are then plotted onto a growth chart.

The lines on a growth chart are called centiles (or percentiles) and **show an expected pattern of growth**. The numbers refer to the percentage of babies at or below the line. For example, a baby whose estimated fetal weight is on the 50th centile, means that 50% of babies at that gestation are the same weight or less.

If any of these measurements plot on or below the 3rd centile at the anomaly scan, as routine at West Suffolk Hospital, we refer you for a fetal medicine scan to further review your baby's growth.

The majority of pregnant people who have a fetal measurement of on or under the 3rd centile at the anomaly scan go on to have a straightforward pregnancy and a normally grown baby.

Babies can be small for a number of reasons:

- Babies may be constitutionally small. This means the baby is small but there is no cause for concern identified. The baby may just be genetically small. For example, taller women tend to have heavier babies, and different ethnic groups tend to have differing size babies on average.

- Sometimes a baby is small due to placental issues. There can be many causes for this, including medical problems such as high blood pressure or pre-eclampsia. Smoking or using drugs can also affect how well the placenta works.
- More rarely, an infection during pregnancy can affect the baby's growth. You might be offered a blood test to look for infection.
- Some babies can be small as a result of a genetic or chromosomal condition. Although this is rare, you may be offered further testing options in relation to this following review with a fetal medicine consultant.

What happens now?

You will be offered referral to a local Fetal Medicine Unit (FMU). This will be at either the Rosie Maternity Hospital at Addenbrooke's in Cambridge or at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

Once we have sent your referral, this is day zero. The FMU team will review your referral and contact you by telephone to arrange an appointment; this may show as a blocked number. You will usually be seen within five days of referral.

You will be seen by a fetal medicine consultant who will perform a more in-depth ultrasound scan of your baby. They will discuss any additional tests with you and depending on the findings of the scan/tests they will plan your ongoing care with you alongside the antenatal and newborn screening midwives at West Suffolk Hospital.

If you, your partner, or family have any further questions or queries, please do contact the antenatal and newborn screening midwives. We understand this can be a worrying time and are here to support you.

Useful information

[Antenatal Results and Choices \(ARC\)](#)

[Screening in pregnancy information leaflets GOV.UK](#)

Contact details

If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Antenatal and newborn screening midwives, we understand this can be a worrying time.

Telephone: 01284 712567

Or email: ANNBscreening@wsh.nhs.uk

Clinical research

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk. This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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