



Prenatal Genetic Screening

The new prenatal genetic screening guideline is now in effect across BC starting February 16, 2009. The new guideline introduces safer, more accurate screens (high detection rates and lower false positive rates) for detecting pregnancies at increased risk for Down syndrome, trisomy 18 and open neural tube defects.

As with previous screening, the new screening options are available on a voluntary basis to all pregnant women in BC free of charge. The new guideline involves two blood tests (the first between 10 and just under 14 weeks of pregnancy; the second between 15 and just under 21 weeks of pregnancy) and in some cases, depending on level of maternal risk and availability of service, a nuchal translucency ultrasound. Health care providers receive screen results within ten days after the second blood test.

The new guideline and related patient education materials are being distributed to GPs, midwives, obstetricians/gynecologists, medical geneticists and other health care providers regularly involved in prenatal care in BC. All materials are available on our website: www.bcprenatalscreening.ca