

## **PRENATAL BLOOD WORK**

The following blood tests are routinely done for all new obstetrical patients.

- The CBC (complete blood count) measures the hemoglobin and various cell counts which provide information on iron stores and infections.
- The blood type and Rh reveals possible blood groups and/or Rh incapability problems. If you are Rh negative, you may receive an injection of RhoGAM at 28 weeks.
- The antibody screen is done to detect unusual antibodies that may have arisen during a prior pregnancy or from a transfusion.
- The rubella test is an antibody test to determine if you are immune to German measles (if a woman is not protected and exposed to rubella, another blood sample will be drawn to determine if she has become infected).
- Tests are done to detect exposure to syphilis and hepatitis B infections, and an HIV screen is recommended.
- Thyroid screening.
- At your first visit, a pap smear and vaginal cultures will also be done.
- At 16-18 weeks of pregnancy, we recommend AFP (alpha fetoprotein) screening. Blood is taken from the mother which allows us to screen the baby for potential abnormalities, primary of the baby's spinal column. It may also detect Down's syndrome. Please refer to the handout on AFP testing, enclosed with this packet for more information.
- At 26-28 weeks of pregnancy, a one hour glucose test will be ordered. This test detects the body's response to sugar in the blood stream and screens patients for gestational (pregnancy) diabetes. A

hemoglobin and hematocrit will also be ordered at this time to provide information on your iron stores. If you are Rh negative, an antibody screen will be done to detect unusual antibodies.

- At 34-36 weeks of pregnancy you will be screened for bacteria called group B strep that is sometimes found in the vagina. While this bacteria is not a problem for most women, it can be harmful to the baby. If you are found to carry this bacteria, IV antibiotics would be given to you during your labor to reduce the risk of infection to your baby.

If you have any questions about these tests, please ask your nurse midwife.