



## **Ultrascreen Consent Form**

### **First Trimester Screening for Down Syndrome and Trisomy 18**

(Maternal Serum Screening and Nuchal Translucency (NT) Sonogram)

- **What are Down Syndrome and Trisomy 18?**

Down Syndrome (Trisomy 21) and Trisomy 18 are chromosomal disorders that cause mental retardation and birth defects. Infants with Down Syndrome have an extra chromosome #21 which causes mental retardation and various medical problems involving the heart, digestive tract, and /or other organ systems. Trisomy 18 (extra chromosome #18) is a more severe disorder which causes profound mental retardation and severe birth defects in many organ systems. Few infants with Trisomy 18 survive more than a few months. The risk of having a baby with a chromosomal abnormality increases with age, although a young woman is at risk as well.

- **What can Ultrascreen tell me about my pregnancy?**

Ultrascreen is **not** a diagnostic test, which means it cannot tell you whether your baby has Down Syndrome or Trisomy 18. Instead, the screening provides a probability, or risk, which is based on three criteria: your age, information obtained on an ultrasound, and blood work. The screening results can either alert you and your healthcare provider that your baby is at an increased risk for one of these chromosome disorders or reassure you that your baby is at a lower risk for these conditions.

- **How is Ultrascreen performed?**

The screening requires an ultrasound and maternal blood work performed between **11 and 13** weeks of pregnancy. During the ultrasound, the skin fold along the back of the baby's neck, called the nuchal translucency, will be measured. A maternal blood sample is used to analyze two chemicals called free beta-human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG) and pregnancy associated plasma protein-A (PAAP-A) circulating throughout your bloodstream. If there is extra fluid behind the baby's neck and the hCG and PAAP-A levels are abnormal, the baby is at increased risk of having Down Syndrome or Trisomy 18. This test combines your age-related risk with the NT measurement and blood work to determine your individual risk.



- **How accurate is Ultrascreen?**

Because this is a screening test, a positive test result shows an increased risk but does not mean that your baby has a problem. On the other hand, a result that shows a decreased risk cannot entirely exclude the possibility that the baby is affected by one of these conditions. The only way to be completely sure that the baby is not affected is to get a diagnostic test such as an amniocentesis. Ultrascreen detects about 85% of pregnancies in which the baby has Down Syndrome or Trisomy 18. If the nuchal translucency is measured without the blood work, the detection rate decreases to 75%. Additionally, this screening test is not designed to provide information about the possibility of other chromosomal abnormalities, nor about many other genetic syndromes, genetic disorders, birth defects, or causes of mental retardation.

- **Should I still have the second trimester serum screening (Quad Screen)?**

The Quad Screen is performed between **16 and 20** weeks of pregnancy. It measures four chemicals: alpha-fetoprotein (AFP), hCG, estriol, and inhibin-A in the mother's blood. Like the first trimester screening, results from a second trimester quad screen can be used to statistically adjust a woman's age-related risk for Down Syndrome and Trisomy 18. In addition, the AFP portion can identify an increased risk for open neural tube defects such as spina bifida, which is not included in the first trimester screen. The quad screen detects about 80% of pregnancies in which the baby has Down Syndrome, and 75-80% of pregnancies affected by spina bifida.

- **What if the screening shows an increased risk for one of the conditions?**

If the screening results indicate that your baby is at an increased risk for either Down Syndrome or Trisomy 18, this does **not** mean that your baby definitely has one of these conditions. A genetic counselor is available to go over your results and to discuss additional testing options such as chorionic villus sampling (CVS) amniocentesis. CVS and amniocentesis are diagnostic tests that can tell you with greater than 99% accuracy whether or not a baby has a chromosomal abnormality. Additionally, extra fluid behind the baby's neck (abnormally large nuchal translucency) is known to be associated with other birth defects like congenital heart defects and skeletal problems.



973.228.3550  
info@AvalonMidWives.com  
www.avalonmidwives.com

Please circle one:

**I consent / do not consent to have the Ultrascreen performed.**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_