

## FETAL NON-STRESS TEST

A non-stress test (NST) is a non-invasive screening tool to monitor placental function and your baby's wellbeing. NSTs may be recommended for pregnancies with specific concerns or complications. Common examples include:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Small baby
- Due date has passed

### What to expect during your NST

1. An NST takes a minimum of 20 minutes, and sometimes takes up to one hour to complete. We will be looking at your baby's heartrate pattern. Just as your heart beats faster when you run up a flight of stairs, your baby's heart should beat faster when kicking and moving.
2. The NST is considered "reactive" or reassuring when the heart rate accelerates or beats faster. These accelerations must happen at least two times within a 20 minute period. If your baby is quiet and not moving, the nurse or medical assistant may offer suggestions on how to stimulate your baby.
3. We would like you to eat before the test as some babies will move more after their moms have eaten. We encourage you to bring cold water and snacks to your visit to promote movement during the test if needed.
4. We will ask you to lie on your left side or place you in a reclined position for the test. You may be asked to change positions during the screening. You will be more comfortable if you empty your bladder before the NST.
5. Two monitors will be placed on your abdomen and held in place by elastic belts. One monitor records your baby's heartbeat. The other monitor records any contractions of your uterus.
  - ❖ *Please keep the belts so that they can be reused during each of your NST visits.*
6. The NST is considered "non-reactive" if accelerations of your baby's heart rate are not seen. This does not necessarily indicate that something is wrong, it simply means that the NST has not provided us with enough information. If your screening is "non-reactive" you may be sent to Labor and Delivery for further monitoring.

NSTs are typically performed once or twice a week. You will continue to see your doctor every two weeks until your 36<sup>th</sup> week, then weekly until delivery. In order to ensure your visits are appropriately spaced out, several appointments will be scheduled at the same time.

Testing will be performed in your OBGYN clinic at Mountain View or Sunnyvale locations, or may also be completed in Maternal Fetal Medicine or Labor and Delivery.