

Removal of measurement of nasal bone

From 26 March 2018, the nasal bone measurement will be removed from the risk algorithm for Down syndrome and other conditions and will no longer be included in the ultrasound screening.

Assessment of the nasal bone has been an optional part of the combined maternal bloods and ultrasound screening for Down syndrome and other conditions since screening started in 2011. It has only been included in the risk result if it is reported at the same time as the other ultrasound measurements by radiology.

While nasal bone measurement can improve the screening test's ability to detect Down syndrome, an under and over-reporting of absent nasal bone, or a poorly performed nasal bone assessment can give inaccurate risk estimates (falsely high or falsely low) because of the high predictive nature of the measurement.

What does this mean for me?

The results of your ultrasound measurements and the blood test will still be combined with other information, such as maternal weight, smoking status, age and ethnicity to provide a risk estimate result of either low risk (less than 1:301) or increased risk (1:300 or greater).

This screening indicates whether your baby has a low or increased chance of having Down syndrome or another condition.

The removal of nasal bone will ensure improved consistency and quality of this reporting.