

## Contact numbers

Antenatal Clinic – 01782 672111

Available: Monday to Friday – 9 am to 5 pm

Maternity Assessment Unit – 01782 672300

Available: 24 hours

Or your Community Midwife on the contact number you were provided with.

## Patient Information Leaflet

# Polyhydramnios

Approved: October 2020  
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Please speak to a member of staff if you need this leaflet in large print, braille, audio or another language

## **Introduction**

The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with more information when your ultrasound scan has shown that the amniotic fluid around your baby has increased.

## **What is Polyhydramnios?**

Polyhydramnios is when there is excess fluid around your baby during pregnancy.

This means that you will need to be seen more frequently as excessive fluid can be associated with certain complications that may affect you or your baby.

## **Why does it happen?**

Polyhydramnios is caused by an increased production of urine by the baby or a reduced swallowing of this fluid.

It is normally spotted during an antenatal check-up in the later stages of your pregnancy and confirmed by a scan.

In 4 out of 5 women, the cause is not known. This is referred to as idiopathic.

- We may discuss inducing your labour or a caesarean section depending on the needs of you and your baby.
- Your baby will be checked after birth to check he/she is feeding normally and having their bowels opened.

## Management of Polyhydramnios

- Following a diagnosis of Polyhydramnios, if it is mild or moderate you will receive Consultant led care.
- If severe, you will be referred to the Fetal Medicine Unit in Royal Stoke University Hospital, where a further detailed ultrasound of your baby will be performed by a specialist Consultant.
- We will conduct regular scans to check both the fluid levels around your baby and to check the growth of your baby.
- On a rare occasion we may recommend a procedure to take away some of the fluid around your baby. This may help reduce the risks of you going into labour before 37 weeks of pregnancy.
- A plan of care focused around the needs of you and your baby will be made with you.

## Diagnosis

An ultrasound scan is used to assess your baby.

During the ultrasound the amniotic fluid level is measured.

This is referred to as the “Amniotic Fluid Index “(AFI). This is classified as mild, moderate or severe.

Your baby is examined closely for any abnormalities in swallowing and circulation of amniotic fluid.

## Risks to baby and mother

After your scan, you may be moved to Consultant care and baby will be monitored with future scans every 2-3 weeks.

You may experience some of the following common symptoms:

- Discomfort in your baby bump.
- Contractions before your due date.
- The uterus measures larger than expected for your dates.
- Difficulty feeling your baby move.
- Your baby bump may feel tight.

**Please speak to your midwife if you are concerned or experience any of these symptoms.**

After your scan you will be meet a midwife or a doctor who will discuss:

- The scan findings.
- A further plan of care in your pregnancy.
- Plans for your delivery.

Your pregnancy appointments may increase as you will need extra scan and clinic appointments.

## **What to expect**

Most women with Polyhydramnios won't have any significant problems during their pregnancy and will have a healthy baby. However, there is a risk that you may experience the following:

- You may go into labour before 37 weeks of pregnancy.
- Your baby may not present head first.
- Your waters may break before labour and the umbilical cord may come out.
- The placenta may separate prematurely.
- Growth problems in your baby.
- You may have an increased blood loss immediately after birth.

Due to these risks and to ensure the safety of both you and your baby we would recommend that you deliver in Hospital with continuous monitoring of baby's heartbeat.