



## **GESTATIONAL DIABETES TESTS**

Diabetes is a medical condition in which there are high levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood stream. Gestational diabetes is the type of diabetes that occurs during pregnancy. Because hormones produced by the placenta (afterbirth) affect the body in a unique fashion, a woman is at greater risk for developing diabetes during pregnancy, or the diabetes that the woman had before pregnancy may be more difficult to control

It is suggested that all pregnant patients be tested for gestational diabetes. If this is done, it is commonly between the 24th and 28th weeks of pregnancy. If certain risk factors occur, testing may be done sooner, and then repeated at this time in gestation.

### **THE SCREENING TEST**

The screening test is usually taken after the patient drinks a sugary-sweet solution. It is all right to have eaten something that day, prior to the test. A blood test is taken one hour after the solution has been ingested.

After the test results come back, the physician will determine whether or not further testing is necessary. If the blood sugar level is high, a more extensive test is necessary (a Three-hour Glucose Tolerance Test-GTT).

### **THREE-HOUR GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST**

- Prior to the test, the patient should not eat or drink anything for at least 8 hours. Also, you should not smoke during this time.
- The patient is given a special set of diet instructions for the 3 days prior to the test. Not all women require this special diet.
- The first step is a blood test. The patient will then be given a sweet drink. She will be asked to remain seated for the duration of the test, without eating, walking, or exercising. Water is allowed.
- Blood tests will be taken every hour for the next 3 hours after the sweet solution has been ingested.
- The results of the test are based upon sugar levels that are too high on at least 2 of the 4 blood tests.

### **SUMMARY**

If gestational diabetes is diagnosed, dietary modifications are recommended. If these changes are not enough to control blood sugar, insulin may be necessary.

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