



## ANTENATAL CARE AND ROUTINE TESTS DURING PREGNANCY

Patient information to assist informed consent

The aim of antenatal care is to achieve the best outcome for the health and well-being of the mother and baby during pregnancy.

If you are planning a pregnancy, see your GP or obstetrician for a check-up. Such a consultation may determine whether you have any conditions or illnesses that could affect your health or the baby's health during pregnancy. Talk with your doctor about:

- preparation for pregnancy, for example, cervical screening test (CST, which has replaced the Pap smear), dietary supplements of folic acid, and vaccination against rubella, whooping cough and influenza
- risk factors such as alcohol, smoking, obesity, or any medicines or drugs.

Give your doctor a list of ALL medicines you take or have taken recently, including prescription, over the counter (without prescription), herbal and alter-

native medicines. If you are being treated for a medical condition (such as epilepsy, diabetes, acne, asthma, high blood pressure, a heart problem, anxiety or depression), talk to your doctor about the effect that medications may have on your pregnancy.

**Genetic counselling:** If you have a child with any illness or problem, or if you or your partner have a family history of a suspected or known health problem that might be inherited, then your doctor may recommend that you see a genetic specialist. An example of an inherited illness is cystic fibrosis.

Genetic counselling helps to assess potential risks and to make an informed choice about family planning. Genetic counselling requires a detailed family history and sometimes a physical examination and laboratory tests to determine the risk of having a baby with an inherited problem.



### THE FIRST VISIT TO YOUR DOCTOR

Your first examination should ideally take place before 10 weeks of pregnancy or when your menstrual period is two to four weeks late.

Your doctor will take a full medical and pregnancy history, conduct a thorough physical examination, estimate the date the baby is due, and discuss with you any potential problems. An ultrasound examination may be undertaken to view the fetus.

Information from this initial consultation will influence the management of your pregnancy and care during and after

labour. For many women, this may be the first time they have had such a thorough examination and consultation.

A hospital or birth centre booking can be made, but you may wish to visit a number of centres before making a final decision about where you would like to have your baby.

**First physical examination:** This may include recording your height, weight, body mass index (BMI) and blood pressure, and examination of your legs for varicose veins.

*Continued on page 2*

### TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

This pamphlet is intended to provide you with general information. It is not a substitute for advice from your doctor and does not contain all known facts about antenatal care.

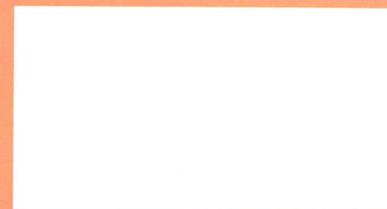
Use this pamphlet only in consultation with your doctor. Read it carefully, and save it for reference.

If you are not sure about the risks, benefits and limitations of antenatal tests, consequences of the tests, terms used in this pamphlet, or related issues, ask your doctor.

Terms are used in this pamphlet that may require further explanation by your doctor. Write down questions you want to ask. Your doctor will be pleased to answer them.

If you are uncertain about your doctor's advice, you may wish to seek the opinion of another doctor.

### Your Doctor



This patient education has been reviewed by obstetricians and gynaecologists in Australia and New Zealand