

OB Panel

The OB Panel, also called a Prenatal Panel, is a common component of labwork done in the first part of pregnancy. Because the hallmark of midwifery care is educating women about their choices and reasons why certain testing is done, we offer you the following information about this labwork to ensure informed consent.

Test	Why It's Important
CBC	Checks hematocrit and hemoglobin, as well as platelet count. This offers an overall view of your potential for anemia or reduced blood clotting, both of which are vital to your and your baby's well-being and development.
Blood Type / Rh Status / Antibody Screen	<p>Knowing your blood type (ABO) and Rh status (Negative / Positive) is important information for any person to have should an emergency occur where blood transfusion is necessary (rarely this occurs after delivery, specifically after a severe postpartum hemorrhage).</p> <p>Pregnancy poses certain risks to babies whose mothers have Rh negative blood types. These women need to be identified as early in pregnancy as possible so they can be considered as candidates for RhoGAM, an immunoglobulin that is given at 28 weeks of pregnancy and within 72 hours of delivery in order for the mother to avoid becoming Rh sensitized. Occasionally, RhoGAM is also given when there is a potential risk for fetal blood to mix with the mother's blood, such as in a car accident or with amniocentesis.</p> <p>Giving RhoGAM prevents the Rh negative mother's body from mounting an antibody response against an Rh positive baby in future pregnancies.</p> <p>An Antibody screen detects antibodies, both Rh and less common types, that may occur in the fetus or newborn. Antibodies have the potential for causing blood disease in the fetus and newborn.</p>
Syphilis Screen	Though rare, Syphilis can lead to preterm labor or even death. Syphilis can also affect the baby's growth and cause congenital anomalies. While the rate of Syphilis in pregnant women in the US is under 1000 per year, the rate is high enough to warrant screening during pregnancy, a time when women are normally under medical care.
Rubella Screen	<p>About 10% of pregnant women are susceptible to Rubella (German Measles), meaning they have no evidence of antibodies for it. Regardless of your vaccination status, you should verify your immunity to Rubella since vaccination does not guarantee lifelong immunity.</p> <p>Rubella can impact the unborn baby of a woman who is not immune and cause congenital anomalies, preterm labor issues and severe medical complications.</p> <p>If a woman is not immune to Rubella during her pregnancy, she should take measures to limit exposure to high-risk sources, such as children who might contract it. Women cannot be immunized for Rubella during pregnancy, but immunization may be done postpartum if the mother desires.</p>
Hepatitis B surface antigen	<p>Women who have Hepatitis B or have been infected previously can transmit the disease to their infant during or after birth, so it's important to discuss in advance the best way to deliver your baby.</p> <p>Babies can become carriers and develop chronic hepatitis. Between 25–35% of those infected eventually die from cirrhosis or liver cancer.</p>
Hepatitis C antibody testing	<p>Women who have Hepatitis C or have been infected previously can, albeit rare, transmit the disease to their infant during birth, so it's important to discuss in advance the best way to deliver your baby.</p> <p>Babies with Hepatitis C can have lifelong liver issues, such as scarring of the liver and liver cancer.</p>

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Varicella Immunity	<p>Varicella (also known as 'chicken pox') is a highly contagious virus. The incidence of varicella infection in pregnant women is 1-5 in 10,000 pregnancies, although the frequency of infection is not increased due to pregnancy. Adults are more likely to develop serious infections and complications than children. Pregnant women infected with varicella may experience miscarriage and fetal death. Unborn babies may develop congenital anomalies.</p> <p>Some women who know that they have been vaccinated against varicella or have had the disease previously may still not have full immunity at the time of pregnancy.</p>
HIV	<p>HIV is the virus that causes AIDS and can be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding.</p> <p>Effective September 2006, CDC has revised its recommendations for HIV testing in Health Care settings. The Revised Recommendations for HIV Testing of Adults, Adolescents, and Pregnant Women in Health Care Settings aim to make HIV testing a routine part of medical care in addition to expanding the gains made in diagnosing HIV infection among pregnant women. Clients can opt-out of HIV screening.</p>
Chlamydia / Gonorrhea	<p>This test can be achieved using a swab collection vaginally or through a urine sample. Chlamydia and gonorrhea are sexually transmitted infections (STIs) that can affect the baby.</p> <p>Chlamydia is the most common STI in the United States and is likely to not have symptoms. Chlamydia, left untreated, can lead to preterm labor, premature rupture of the membranes, and low birth weight. Newborn infections can cause eye and lung infections.</p> <p>Like Chlamydia, Gonorrhea is a common STI in the United States. Untreated infections in pregnancy can cause miscarriages, preterm labor, premature rupture of the membranes, premature birth, and low birth weight. In the baby, it can cause eye infections that could lead to blindness.</p>
Urine culture	<p>A clean catch urine culture can identify urinary tract infections and the presence of Group B Strep (GBS) in the urine. Urinary tract infections are more common in pregnancy and sometimes are present without any symptoms which can lead to kidney infections and preterm labor. The identification of GBS in the urine can indicate a high count of this bacteria in your vaginal tract, which could increase the rate of preterm labor and infection in the baby.</p>

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