



FACT SHEET - Prospective Parents - What it's Like to Receive Unexpected Result

Prospective parents can prepare themselves for receiving unexpected results by understanding the prenatal screening process better and what their options are.

Parents may receive their results from their GP, obstetrician, sonographer, genetic counsellor, or another healthcare professional. You may be told in a location that you weren't expecting to be in, or you may be by yourself when you are given unexpected results.

Unfortunately, this news might not be shared in an appropriate way – language may be poor, too much medical terminology may be used in the discussion, or the healthcare professional may not share the news appropriately.

Screening tests are used to identify the chance of a baby having a chromosomal condition such as Down syndrome.

They do not provide a definitive diagnosis.

In rare cases a low chance screening result will be returned, and the baby will subsequently be diagnosed with a screened-for condition.



Where a high chance result is returned on a screening test, a diagnostic test should be offered.

Talk openly with your healthcare professional about your options, and ensure you ask any questions around your options.

If you would like to speak to a Support Services Officer who can provide non-directive support through your journey, or would like to connect with a parent who has gone through a similar experience, , please complete this form so we can contact you and understand how we can best support you.

<https://prenatalscreening.org.au/support/>

References

Down Syndrome Queensland. (2022). Practice Resource – Prenatal Screening for Chromosomal Conditions including Down syndrome.
<https://prenatalscreening.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Prenatal-Screening-Practice-Resource.pdf>

Down Syndrome Australia. (2021). 'We all have a lot to learn' – Prenatal screening for Down syndrome: A discussion paper.
https://www.downsyndrome.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/DSA_Prenatal-Screening-Experiences.pdf