

## Genetic Counseling

Prenatal diagnosis assists women in making informed decisions and helps with the management of their pregnancy. Genetic counseling is always scheduled prior to performing a CVS procedure. The counseling session typically lasts 30-45 minutes. Genetic counseling will help you fully understand:

- The risk you have of passing an inheritable disease or birth defect to your baby
- The optimal method to evaluate this risk
- The procedure's risks and alternatives
- When test results will be available
- Possible management of abnormal test results

After genetic counseling is complete, the CVS procedure will be scheduled.

### Is CVS safe?

CVS has been proven to be a safe procedure for both mother and baby. Miscarriages may occur spontaneously before or after CVS, independent of the procedure. The possible risk of a miscarriage related to the CVS procedure is between 0.5% (1 in 200 chance) to 1% (1 in 100 chance). About 1-2% of women receive inconclusive test results which require an amniocentesis. Possible complications after CVS include fluid leakage, spotting or bleeding, cramping or infection. The physician's record of successful procedures is important in decreasing the risk of miscarriage.



### Vernon Cook, M.D.

*Associate Professor: Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Women's Health.*

*Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine*

Since 1994, Dr. Cook has performed more than 325 CVS procedures. Of those procedures, no healthy pregnancy losses occurred within the 10-14 day interval before test results were reported.

### Scheduling a CVS procedure?

If you are interested in having a CVS procedure, talk with your obstetrician to arrange for initial counseling and to obtain a written referral (if required for insurance purposes). You can then schedule your pre-CVS genetic counseling by calling the UofL Obstetrical Ultrasound Department. Your counselor will schedule your CVS procedure for you after completion of counseling. Often the CVS procedure can be scheduled on the same day as your counseling appointment. Most CVS appointments are scheduled a week or more in advance, although exceptions can be made to accommodate patient special needs.



**University Women's HealthCare**

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Redefining Women's Healthcare



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## Chorionic Villus Sampling at the University of Louisville

More than 400 CVS procedures have  
been performed by  
UofL physicians

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**University of Louisville  
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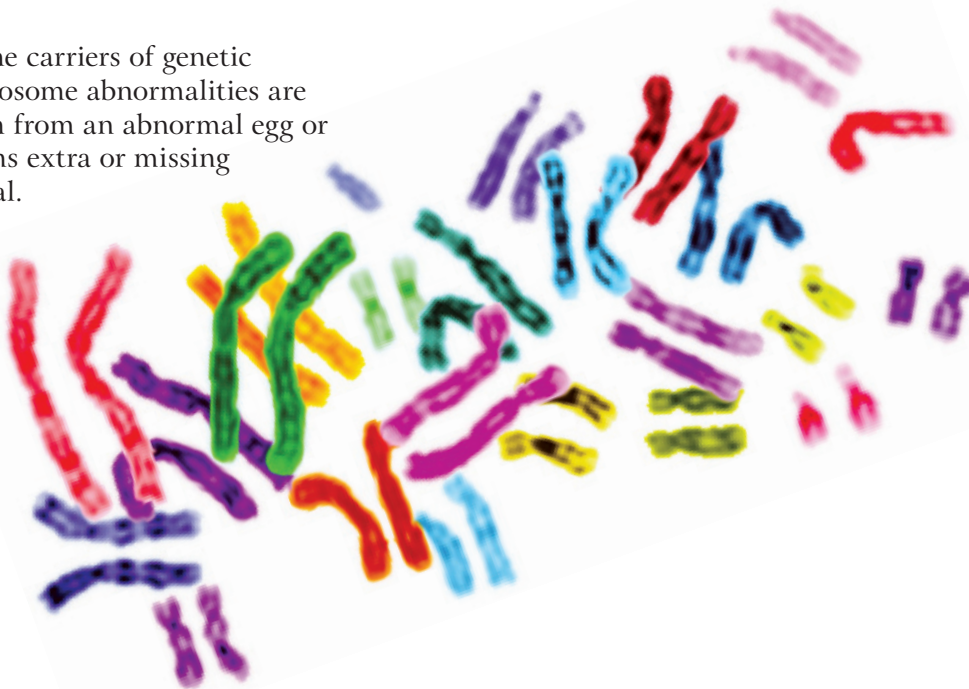
*In making a decision to have chorionic villus sampling (CVS), it is necessary to consider its risks, benefits and limitations. CVS permits first trimester pregnancy evaluation for birth defects.*

Many parents want information about the health of their unborn baby. Most women give birth to healthy babies, but some pregnancies have an increased risk of a baby with a birth defect. CVS can diagnose many chromosomal disorders such as Down Syndrome. CVS is performed between 10-13 weeks gestation. CVS retrieves tiny pieces of the early placenta (commonly called “the afterbirth”) which are evaluated for chromosome abnormalities.

## What is a Chromosome Abnormality?

Chromosomes are the carriers of genetic information. Chromosome abnormalities are caused at conception from an abnormal egg or sperm which contains extra or missing chromosome material.

Everyone has some abnormal sperm or eggs. The risk of an abnormal conception increases with the mother's age.



## Who Should Consider CVS Testing?

You and your doctor can decide whether you can benefit from CVS testing. CVS may be recommended for women:

- Who will be 35 or older at delivery.
- Who have had a baby with a birth defect.
- Who have a relative with a chromosome abnormality, mental retardation, or a genetic disorder.
- Who have experienced two or more pregnancy losses (spontaneous abortions, stillbirths, or neonatal deaths).
- Who have an increased risk of having a baby with Down Syndrome based on first trimester prenatal screening.
- Who are concerned about having a baby with a genetic abnormality.

## How is CVS Performed?

An ultrasound examination is performed before and during the CVS procedure. The ultrasound exam confirms the dating of your pregnancy and determines the best area for sampling. Some say CVS does not hurt at all, others feel some pressure or cramping. Depending on the location of the placenta, the doctor performs the CVS by placing a small catheter through the vagina or by placing a needle through the abdomen under ultrasound guidance to obtain a small sample of tissue. The chromosome test results are usually completed in less than 10 days. Some special genetic testing may require additional time for completion. The most serious risk from CVS is miscarriage.

## Transcervical procedure

