

# GBS

## What is GBS?

Group B Strep (GBS) is a type of bacteria that can be found in up to 40% of pregnant women. This bacterium often lives in the mouth, digestive tract, urinary tract, and/or reproductive tract of some people. Women who test positive for GBS are said to be colonized, meaning that the bacteria lives in their body, but is not causing an infection.

## When should I be screened for GBS?

All pregnant women should be screened for GBS around 35 weeks of pregnancy. This screening is done by taking a sterile Q-tip swab of the vagina and perineum.

## What happens if I am GBS positive?

If your GBS screen is positive, you will be treated with IV antibiotics during labor. This is to help protect your baby from contracting a GBS infection.

## What could happen if my baby gets infected?

There are two types of GBS infections in infants:

- Early infections occur within the first 7 days after birth. Most occur within the first 6 hours of life. This infection is very serious and can cause inflammation of the baby's blood, lungs, heart, brain, or spinal cord. Treatment for this type of infection requires IV antibiotics for baby in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit. Treatment can also include monitoring of the heart beat, support with breathing using oxygen or ventilation machines, and IV fluids.
- Late infections occur after the first 7 days of life. The most serious effect of a late GBS infection is meningitis, an inflammation of the sac surrounding the baby's brain. This is a serious infection and requires hospitalization, IV antibiotics, and close monitoring of your baby.

REMEMBER: 98-99% of baby's who are exposed to GBS do not get sick.