

## **Genetic Carrier Testing and Immunizations Prior to Pregnancy**

The American College of OB/GYN among several professional organizations now recommends that all couples consider having genetic carrier testing performed before they conceive. There are a number of specific genetic disorders that are recessive diseases. A recessive disease does not become apparent until a person inherits two mutations from each of their parents. In other words, a person can carry a single recessive gene on one of their chromosomes and remain totally healthy. However, if their partner has a mutation of the same gene, then the child has a 25% chance of having the illness. Most of these illnesses are substantial, generally associated with a shorter life span, and have serious persistent symptoms. A good example is cystic fibrosis which is an autosomal recessive disorder where the affected person (child) can have breathing and gastrointestinal problems throughout their life. The risk for these genetic diseases usually varies with your ethnicity. For instance, Caucasians are more at risk for cystic fibrosis while Asians are more at risk for a serious anemia called thalassemia. People of Jewish ancestry are more at risk for a series of specific metabolic disorders.

Certain contagious infectious diseases can be avoided or mitigated by receiving an immunization. It is recommended that your immunity to rubella and varicella be tested and that you be immunized prior to pregnancy if you are susceptible to either of these diseases. Furthermore, an influenza vaccine is recommended prior to pregnancy.

### **GENETIC TESTING AND VACCINATION:**

Please review the following statements:

1. Recessive genetic diseases can be life-long illnesses that have substantial medical implications.
2. I understand that the decision to be tested for genetic carrier status for specific diseases is completely mine.
3. I understand that the test does not detect all carriers of a particular genetic disease.
4. I understand that if I am a carrier then testing my partner will help us learn more about the chance that our baby could have a significant hereditary disease.
5. I understand if one partner is a recessive carrier and the other is not, it is still possible that the baby will have that particular disease, but the chance of this occurring is very small.
6. I understand that if a baby has an inherited mutation of the same gene from each parent, the only way to avoid the birth of that baby with that genetic disease is by terminating the pregnancy.
7. I understand that certain infectious diseases can be prevented or mitigated by immunization.

### ***Acknowledgement (This is an Information Sheet and not a Consent):***

We have read this information sheet regarding genetic testing and immunizations and will have the opportunity to ask questions. These genetic tests and immunization screen are moderately expensive and are usually, but not necessarily, covered by medical insurance. It can take 2 to 4 weeks to receive genetic test(s) results and a needed immunization may have a 30 day waiting period before it is recommended to attempt conception. Preconception genetic testing and immunity to rubella, varicella and influenza are recommended but not required prior to fertility therapy.

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Signature (Female Partner)

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Date

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Signature (Male Partner)

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Date