

Agency Name
Pregnancy Testing and Counseling Protocol

Introduction

The goals of **(agency name)** pregnancy testing and counseling services is to:

- Diagnose early pregnancy.
- Diagnosis a health problem that may have negative consequences on a client's health, fertility, or may be life threatening (e.g. ectopic pregnancy).
- To facilitate appropriate medical care including prenatal and pregnancy termination.
- To provide information needed to enable clients to make an informed decision most compatible with their emotional, spiritual and physical well-being and beliefs.

Pregnancy testing, evaluation and education and counseling will include laboratory testing using a highly sensitive pregnancy test **(insert name of test)**, obtaining adequate history including symptoms of pregnancy, physical assessment including pelvic examination and counseling and education as appropriate.

Positive Pregnancy Test Results

1. Clients with a positive pregnancy test and who elect to continue the pregnancy should receive a referral for early initiation of prenatal care. These clients should be provided information about good health practices during early pregnancy, especially ones which serve to protect the pregnancy during the first 3 months (e.g. good nutrition, avoidance of smoking, drugs, and exposure to x-rays). If the client has any medical problem or is taking a medication(s) that may prove harmful to a pregnancy, she may have an opportunity to discuss this issue with a clinician or will be advised to do so with her appropriate health care provider.
2. Clients with a positive pregnancy test should receive a medical examination at the time of laboratory testing. If this is not possible, the client must be counseled as to the importance of receiving a physical examination as soon as possible, preferably within 15 days. This can be done on-site or through a referral source.
3. Clients with a positive pregnancy test who have a history indicative of ectopic pregnancy, pelvic infection, or other relevant symptoms, will be evaluated by a clinician. She will then be examined by the clinician, referred to an emergency facility, or other health care provider/facility depending upon clinician judgment.
4. All pregnant clients must be offered the opportunity to be provided information and counseling regarding:
 - prenatal care and delivery;
 - infant care, foster care, or adoption; and
 - pregnancy termination.

If desired by the client, she will be provided neutral, factual information and nondirective counseling on each of the options, and referral upon request, except with respect to any option(s) about which the pregnant woman indicates she does not wish to receive such information and counseling.

Negative Pregnancy Test Results

1. Clients with a negative pregnancy test should have a second pregnancy test within two weeks of the first test.
2. Clients with a negative pregnancy test should have the cause of delayed menses investigated. If ectopic pregnancy is suspected, the client must be referred for immediate diagnosis and therapy.
3. Clients with a negative pregnancy test should be given information about the availability of contraceptive and infertility services as appropriate.
4. Clients with a negative pregnancy test should have pelvic examination if any of the following circumstances apply:
 - If the client has experienced two consecutive negative pregnancy tests performed at a two week interval.
 - If client's history and symptoms are inconsistent with test results.
 - If the client has missed two or more periods.
 - If the client has a history indicative of ectopic pregnancy or symptoms of ectopic pregnancy.
 - If the client has a history of false negative pregnancy tests.
 - If the client has vaginal complaints (vaginal discharge, lower abdominal pain, etc.)
 - If the client has been using any medications or drugs which may interfere with the accuracy of the results.
 - If the last menstrual period is unknown.
 - If the client has an IUD/IUS in place.
 - If the client is a hormonal method user and has missed one period.

Important: A woman can be pregnant though her pregnancy test is negative and she is not experiencing symptoms of pregnancy. This must be considered in the decision-making process for clinician evaluation, particularly if there is significant discrepancy between LMP and date of negative pregnancy test or when two pregnancy tests taken 2 weeks apart are negative.