

Dr. Owen R. Bell, M.D. PC

AMNIOCENTESIS CONSENT FORM

Amniocentesis is the removal of fluid from the amniotic sac (bag of waters) during pregnancy.

The main objective of amniocentesis is to obtain amniotic fluid from within the uterus under sterile conditions and ultrasound guidance. A needle is inserted into the skin of the abdomen and into the cavity of the uterus. A small amount of fluid –less than an ounce- will then be removed and sent to the laboratory for examination. The needle will cause some pain when it penetrates the uterus, but the pain should not last long and should not hurt worse than an injection into any other part of your body. After the fluid removal has been accomplished, the removal of the needle should cause no further discomfort.

Laboratory Studies

The laboratory will perform the following studies on the sample of amniotic fluid:

1. The alpha-fetoprotein level can be checked. An elevation beyond normal limits may suggest one of several abnormalities such as failure of the spinal cord to close, failure of the abdomen to close or obstruction in the gastrointestinal or urinary systems.
2. Cells, which are always present in the amniotic fluid, can be collected and grown in tissue culture to check for abnormalities of the chromosomes.
3. Biochemical testing to determine the maturity of the fetus can be done if needed.

Safety and Risks

In the medical literature, authors give varying estimates of the risks of amniocentesis. Some estimate that 1 out of every 200 procedures will initiate an unwanted loss of the pregnancy secondary to infection, leakage of fluid, bleeding, injury to the baby or placenta or other problems. Others report much less of a risk, such as 1 in 250 procedures.

A failure of the amniocentesis, or need to repeat the amniocentesis may result from uninterruptible results, failure of the cells to grow, contaminated specimen, or incorrect diagnosis. (Amniocentesis can be done as early as 12 weeks of gestation; reliably, however; technically, it is more difficult and there are fewer and less mature cells available to grow.)

Dr. Owen R. Bell, M.D. PC
AMNIOCENTESIS CONSENT FORM

Situations that may justify the risk:

- Need to establish pulmonary (respiratory) maturity in a fetus.
- Birth of a previous child with a chromosome abnormality (Down's Syndrome)
- Mother's age over 35. Father's age over 55.
- Either parent with a known chromosome abnormality
- Abnormal maternal Prenatal Risk Profile

A normal Amniocentesis cannot guarantee a normal child – there is no way at present to test for all abnormalities.

I understand the risks of AMNIOCENTESIS as explained.

NAME: _____ **Date:** _____

Witness: _____

I understand this Amniocentesis is indicated for the following reasons:

Risk of genetic abnormality

Risk of Down's Syndrome

Other:

Knowing these reasons and understanding my risks, I decline this Amniocentesis.

NAME: _____ **Date:** _____

Witness: _____