



## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

Home pregnancy tests detect the hormone human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), which is present in the urine of a pregnant woman. These tests are simple to use; and one week after a missed period, an estimated 97% of women will get accurate results. hCG is produced by the placenta in increasing amounts within 10 days after fertilization. An absence of a menstrual period in a sexually active female is usually the first reason a pregnancy test is utilized. Other signs of pregnancy include:

- Morning sickness (nausea, vomiting, food and smell intolerance).
- Frequent urination.
- Tender, swollen breasts.
- Darkening of the area (areola) around the nipples.
- Food cravings.
- Blue and pink lines under the skin on the breasts and, later, on the abdomen.

### TYPES OF TESTS

There are a variety of home pregnancy tests that are available without the need of a prescription. They all use a urine sample for the basis of the test and results are available in 1 to 30 minutes. Some tests claim to detect pregnancy as early as the first day of a missed period (menses). However, a medical study has shown that at least 10% of pregnancies are undetectable on the first day of the missed period.

### USING TESTS WISELY

- Check the expiration date. If the date is past, don't buy the product.
- Follow package directions about storing the test at home.
- Learn about the limitations of the test. Remember, no test is 100% accurate.
- Read the insert to learn how to use the test. Review the instructions so each step is fully understood.
- Don't guess if something is unclear. Consult a pharmacist or call an "800" number, or check the company's website if one is listed in the instructions.
- Note any special precautions before using the test.
- Follow instructions exactly. Don't skip a step.
- Note what to do if results are positive, negative or unclear.
- Keep a record of the test results, the date and the brand name of the test to advise the health care provider if necessary.
- Discard used materials as directed.
- For more information on pregnancy tests, check the website for FertilityPlus: [www.fertilityplus.org/faq/hpt.html](http://www.fertilityplus.org/faq/hpt.html).

### NEGATIVE RESULTS

- If a pregnancy test is negative and the woman is still not menstruating, she should wait the number of days suggested in the instructions and test again—making sure all instructions are followed correctly. If the second test is negative and there is still no menstrual period, she should consult her health care provider.
- A false-negative can occur with a home pregnancy test. The result indicates there is no pregnancy when, in fact, there is. Pregnant women don't always produce the hCG hormone at the same rate, so a woman could be pregnant, but not yet producing enough of the hormone to obtain a positive test result. Also, the levels of the hormone needed to trigger the positive results vary from test to test. One of the problems of a false-negative result is that a woman might continue certain practices, such as smoking, excessive drinking or using some medications that are potentially harmful to the baby's health.

### POSITIVE RESULTS

A positive result of a home pregnancy test does not replace the need to schedule an appointment with the health care provider. Confirmation of the pregnancy is determined with a physical examination that is combined with a complete prenatal checkup.



## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

You or a family member has:

- A positive result from a home pregnancy test.
- A negative result from a first or second home pregnancy test and a menstrual period that is a week or more overdue.