

Fetal and Pregnancy Health Program

Comprehensive, collaborative care for complex fetal problems





Collaborative and streamlined care

Learning that an eagerly awaited child may be born with a birth defect or medical condition can be a very difficult time for expectant parents.

From evaluation and diagnosis through treatment and community-based follow-up, we are here to help. Our team provides deep expertise as well as extraordinary care and support for handling the most challenging situations before and after the birth of a baby. This program provides patients with a single point of entry for accessing the outstanding medical and surgical subspecialists at the Johnson Center for Pregnancy and Newborn Services and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford.

Our multidisciplinary approach to streamlined, comprehensive care makes it possible to get information and recommendations as quickly as possible.



Leading-edge fetal imaging and diagnostic services

Clarifying the fetal diagnosis is critically important to making the right management plan for pregnant moms and babies. Mothers who are referred to us undergo a series of individualized evaluations, which may include:

- Detailed fetal ultrasound, including 3D and 4D ultrasound
- Fetal MRI
- Fetal echocardiogram
- Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT)
- Chorionic villus sampling
- Amniocentesis
- Fetal blood sampling

Our coordinators work with patients to arrange appointments at convenient times, and our medical social work team helps arrange accommodations for families traveling from a distance.

Getting the answers you need

Once tests have been done to confirm or better understand the mother's and/or baby's diagnosis, parents will meet with our Fetal and Pregnancy Health team of experts. They will review and explain all findings, discuss treatment options, answer questions and make sure parents have the information they need to make the best decision for their family. We believe in family-centered care, with patients and

families working in partnership with their health care team. Families can expect to play an active role throughout the pregnancy and to receive open communication and support during an anxious time.

Your fetal health care team

Depending on the diagnosis and needs, our care team may include experts from the following subspecialties:

- Maternal–fetal medicine (high-risk obstetrics)
- Fetal surgery and intervention
- Fetal imaging and pediatric radiology
- Perinatal genetics
- Neonatology
- Pediatric surgery
- Fetal and child neurology
- Gynecologic oncology
- Pediatric cardiology
- Pediatric cardiothoracic surgery
- Pediatric nephrology
- Pediatric neurosurgery
- Pediatric urology
- Other medical and surgical subspecialties

Our fetal health care team also includes coordinators, medical social workers and parent mentors.



Communication and partnership with your obstetrician

Many expectant mothers continue to receive care from their own obstetrician throughout their pregnancy. Our fetal health care team will communicate with a patient's obstetrician every step of the way to share information about scheduled appointments and provide input and recommendations.

Care close to home

Our goal is to determine what is best for the individual patient and to make plans with referring physicians to ensure the best possible outcomes for each mother and baby. When the right resources and facilities for follow-up care and delivery exist near the family, we help to arrange ongoing care close to home. Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford has a network of perinatal diagnostic centers in locations throughout the greater Bay Area, including Mountain View, Fremont, Redwood City, Santa Cruz, Palo Alto, Modesto and Salinas. These satellite facilities help families stay close to home as they receive ongoing advanced ultrasound imaging, input from Packard Children's maternal-fetal medicine specialists and genetic counseling in their local areas.

Delivering your baby

Depending on the diagnosis and expected needs at birth, some mothers may need to be delivered at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford to receive immediate intensive care or surgical treatment or to be evaluated by expert pediatric specialists. If so, as part of their consultations with the Fetal and Pregnancy Health care team, families will be invited to tour our Labor and Delivery unit and nurseries before their baby is born. However, in other cases, we may determine along with the referring physician that the mother can safely deliver at her home hospital and receive follow-up care for the baby from experts at Packard Children's or at a Stanford Children's Health clinic closer to home. Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford has a network of neonatal intensive care units throughout the great Bay Area, including Redwood City, Salinas, Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Our team is committed to close communication with patients, their families and referring physicians. No matter where a patient delivers, we work to make sure the best plan is in place and provide compassion and support every step of the way.

Fetal conditions and diagnoses

The Fetal and Pregnancy Health Program evaluates, manages and treats a wide variety of complex fetal and placental problems in partnership with Placental Disorders Services and offers highly specialized diagnostic procedures and therapeutic interventions. The following are only a few of the conditions we manage:

- Anemia/isoimmunization
- Complicated monochorionic twin and triplet pregnancies (twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, selective twin growth restriction, twin reverse arterial perfusion)
- Congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH)
- Congenital heart defects
- Congenital pulmonary airway malformations (fetal lung masses)
- Fetal renal failure requiring dialysis and transplant
- Hydrops
- Hydrothorax/pleural effusion
- Lower urinary tract obstruction (LUTO)/bladder outlet obstruction
- Neck masses
- Neonatal alloimmune thrombocytopenia (NAIT)
- Placental disorders (accreta, increta, percreta)
- Sacroccygeal teratomas
- Spina bifida

Maternal–fetal treatments and interventions

Some rare and severe fetal diagnoses may require specialized treatment and maternal–fetal surgery even before the baby is born. Our Fetal and Pregnancy Health team of experts can provide the most advanced therapy for the mother and fetus, including:

- Amniofusion and amnioreduction
- Ex-utero intrapartum treatment (EXIT) procedures
- Fetal shunt placement for fetal bladder obstruction, hydrothorax and lung masses
- Fetal thoracentesis
- Fetal transfusion of blood and platelets
- Fetoscopic laser ablation of shared placental anastomosis (for twin-to-twin transfusion)
- Fetoscopic surgery and open fetal surgery for neural tube defects and tracheal occlusion for severe pulmonary hypoplasia in congenital diaphragmatic hernia
- Immediate postnatal access to cardiac treatment (IMPACT)
- Medical treatment for fetal cardiac arrhythmias
- Multidisciplinary management of placenta accreta, increta, percreta
- Selective fetal reduction for complex twins
- Treatment for fetal infections

Improving outcomes through research

Through its association with Stanford Medicine, our Fetal and Pregnancy Health team offers patients the benefit of the latest advances in maternal–fetal, neonatal and pediatric care. Our medical and surgical specialists are research leaders in their fields. Their innovative investigations put our team at the leading edge of maternal and infant care and improved outcomes. By bringing together exceptional diagnostic, medical and surgical expertise in a single team, we offer complete and coordinated care for complex fetal patients and their families in order to ensure the best possible outcomes.

A special place for healing and hope

Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford is the heart of Stanford Children’s Health, and it is one of the nation’s top hospitals for the care of children and expectant mothers. We deliver innovative care and research through partnerships, collaborations, outreach, specialty clinics and primary care practices at more than 100 locations in the U.S. western region. Learn more at fetalhealth.stanfordchildrens.org.

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