North Clinic

~Where caring is a tradition~

QUAD SCREENING: THE FACTS

What does Quad Screening detect?

Quad screening may help identify pregnancies that are at an increased risk for certain types of birth defects including open neural tube defects and Down's Syndrome (see below).

How and when is the test done?

The screening process requires a small blood sample from the mother which is drawn at 15 to 19 weeks of pregnancy.

What are open neural tube defects?

Open neural tube defects refers to a group of conditions which involve an open area along the baby's spine or skull that failed to close during development. Spina bifida refers to the spinal defects, where as anencephaly is failure of the skull to develop properly. Spina bifida may be very minor or may result in some degree of paralysis and lack of bowel and bladder control. It is sometimes associated with Hydrocephaly (meaning water on the brain), and mental retardation. Anencephaly is a very severe condition and babies who have this problem usually die shortly after birth. *Quad screening identifies about 80% of pregnancies where neural tube defects are present.*

What is Down's Syndrome?

Down's Syndrome results from a baby's cells having an extra copy of the chromosome #21. Children with Down's Syndrome tend to have distinct facial appearance and some degree of mental retardation. In some cases they may have other birth defects involving the heart and digestive tract. Although the chance of having a baby with this condition increases as a woman gets older, every pregnant woman has the chance of having a baby with Down's Syndrome. *Quad screening identifies about two out of three pregnancies where Down's Syndrome is present.*