

Persistent Fetal Vasculature

Patient Information Series – What you should know, what you should ask.

What is Persistent Fetal Vasculature?

Your doctor has told you that your baby has been diagnosed with a rare condition of the eyes called Persistent Fetal Vasculature. This means that the eye of your baby has not developed properly.

How did it happen?

Your baby's eye has maintained vessels that normally disappear as the fetus grows in the womb. This can compromise the function of the eye. This anomaly is usually only recognized late in pregnancy, and it is often seen in association with other severe abnormalities.

Are chromosomes important?

This condition is usually not associated with abnormal chromosomes, but there are often genetic conditions where this anomaly is common. This explains why your doctor has probably looked very carefully at the baby's brain.

Will I need other investigations?

The doctor may suggest additional investigations to exclude genetic and family conditions. If no other anomalies have been found, the eye anomaly is then isolated.

What are the things to watch for during the pregnancy?

The pregnancy care and the mode of delivery will not need to change with respect to another pregnancy.

What does it mean for my baby after it is born?

At birth, the baby may show typical white pupils. Although this is strange, it does not mean your baby will be blind. The anomaly is serious but can be cured with surgery and other eye treatment after birth. Your baby will need your support to stick to the treatments as these will help the baby to have normal sight.

Will it occur again in another pregnancy?

The anomaly usually only happens once and will not repeat unless a genetic predisposition has come to light. In that case, the doctor will do genetic tests and schedule several scans for any subsequent pregnancies.

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