

# Fetal Growth Restriction

## Fetal Growth Restriction

Fetal growth restriction (also known as intrauterine growth restriction) is a condition that happens when an unborn baby is smaller than expected during pregnancy.

Fetal growth restriction (FGR) is usually diagnosed when a baby's estimated weight is less than the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Not all babies who are small will have FGR. If a pregnant person is small, their baby may be smaller in size.

## Types of Fetal Growth Restriction

There are two types of FGR.

- Symmetrical FGR is when all body parts are small in size.
- Asymmetrical FGR is when the baby's head and brain are normal size, but the rest of body is small in size.

## Diagnosis

Your health care provider will measure your fundal height. This is the distance from your pubic bone to the top of your uterus. If this distance is shorter than normal, an ultrasound will be done to confirm if your baby has FGR.

## Causes

In most cases, FGR is caused by your baby not getting enough nutrition and oxygen from the placenta. This can slow your baby's growth.

FGR is more common if you:

- are pregnant with twins, triplets or higher-order multiples (3 or more babies)
- have had a baby with FGR
- have high blood pressure or preeclampsia.

## Risk Factors

The following may increase the risk of your baby having FGR:

- smoking during pregnancy
- alcohol or drug use during pregnancy
- an infection in the womb
- taking certain medicines
- certain medical conditions such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.
- anemia
- not eating well or being underweight during pregnancy.

**(over)**



## Treatment

There is no treatment for FGR.

If your baby has FGR, they will be watched closely. You will have more prenatal visits and ultrasounds to keep track of your baby's growth and well-being.

Along with the ultrasounds, you may also have non-stress tests. During this test, an electronic fetal monitor records your baby's heart rate for 20 to 30 minutes. During that time, you indicate when you feel your baby move. Sometimes sound or vibration is used to get your baby to move.

Your health care provider will also help you manage your health by treating any illnesses, and making sure you are eating well and gaining the right amount of weight.

If your baby has stopped growing or they have any other problems, your health care provider will talk with you about delivering your baby early.

## After Your Baby Is Born

It is possible that your baby could have some health problems after they are born. Your baby may have:

- trouble regulating their temperature and blood glucose
- lower oxygen levels
- a low Apgar scores (This test checks breathing, heart rate, color, muscle tone and reflexes.)
- jaundice
- a higher red blood cell count
- trouble fighting an infection.

Your health care team will be ready to care for your baby after they are born.