

## Nuchal Translucency: First Trimester Screening Offered at Bedford Commons

Bedford Commons OB-GYN is proud to be the first and only private practice in our area to offer a new first trimester test for obstetrical patients. This highly specialized test, called Ultrascreen, provides risk assessment screening for Down syndrome and Trisomy 18. The test is performed between 10 and 14 weeks gestation, and involves an ultrasound to measure the fetal nuchal translucency (the fluid behind the baby's neck) and two blood analyses. Measurement of nuchal translucency requires special training, and we are pleased to announce that our Practice has been officially certified by the Fetal Medicine Foundation to perform this test.

First trimester screening can provide early reassurance to low risk patients, and allow patients who are found to be at risk to consider earlier diagnostic testing. It is important to remember that amniocentesis is still the "gold standard" of screening for pregnant women older than 35 years of age, but in select cases, a woman over 35 may choose this less invasive screening option. Ultrascreen does not screen for neural tube defects, and a 16-week alpha fetal protein blood test and/or an 18-week fetal survey ultrasound is still advised.

We are extremely pleased to have the capability to offer this new, additional, state-of-the-art genetic screening test for our obstetrical patients, and plan to make this testing available to obstetrical patients of other providers in our area. If you or someone you know would like to receive additional information about this procedure, contact our office at (603) 668-8400 or ask one of our providers about Ultrascreen.