

Diabetes and Prenatal Screening

On the Test Request Forms for the California Prenatal Screening Program is the question: “Is patient insulin-dependent diabetic (prior to pregnancy)?” The Program would like to clarify the question and appropriate answers, based on recent literature and consultation with medical experts.

Prenatal patients with diabetes are currently being treated with a range of treatment options and medications. The patient may be diet controlled, taking an oral agent, taking insulin, or receiving no treatment. The diagnosis of diabetes may have been made prior to, or during the pregnancy. Pregnant patients are typically screened for gestational diabetes at 24-28 weeks gestation.* Therefore, the diagnosis of gestational diabetes does not apply to prenatal screening under the California Program, since blood must be drawn by 20 weeks 0 days gestation.

As a result, for prenatal screening purposes, the question is really meant to distinguish between a diabetic or a non-diabetic patient. For the pregnant diabetic patient, adjustments to various analyte values, for both the first and second trimester, will be made based on data from the California Program.

Upcoming versions of the Test Request Forms will simplify the question to read: “Is the patient diabetic?”

Policy:

The IDD question on the Test Request Form is answered “**Yes**”:

- When a patient has been diagnosed with diabetes prior to pregnancy.
- When a patient has been diagnosed with diabetes during pregnancy prior to 24 weeks gestation.
- When a patient has been diagnosed as a Type I or Type II diabetic in the early stages of her pregnancy.
- When a patient with adult-onset diabetes, treated with diet, is screened in the 1st or 2nd trimester.

The IDD question is answered “**No**”:

- When the patient is non-diabetic or has been diagnosed with gestational diabetes after 24 weeks.
- If a pregnant patient was diagnosed with gestational diabetes in a prior pregnancy, and does not have a diagnosis of diabetes in her current pregnancy.

Note: Pregnant women with diabetes have a significantly higher risk for birth defects, especially Neural Tube Defects. Some diabetics, therefore, use their insurance to go directly for prenatal diagnostic testing, instead of participating in prenatal screening.

