

Greenwich Hospital

What is a Biophysical Profile?

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is biophysical profile?

The biophysical profile is a painless procedure that checks the health and well-being of your baby before birth. It is usually performed in the last trimester of pregnancy. This profile combines a non-stress test with an ultrasound.

At Greenwich Hospital, the non-stress test is completed in the Labor & Delivery Unit and the ultrasound is completed in the Perinatology Suite by an ultrasound technologist and a perinatologist, an obstetrician who specializes in high risk pregnancies. It may take 1 to 2 hours to complete both tests.

How do I prepare for the biophysical profile?

- There are no dietary restrictions or preparations prior to the test.
- You will be asked to empty your bladder prior to the test so that you are more comfortable.

How is the biophysical profile performed?

There are five parts to the biophysical profile that are evaluated:

- **One part** of the profile includes a non-stress test that measures your baby's heart rate in response to the baby's movement (See patient/family information sheet for non-stress test).
- You will also have an ultrasound that uses high frequency sound waves to create an image of your baby and his internal organs (See patient/family information sheet for ultrasound).
- During the ultrasound, the perinatologist and/or the technologist will observe the following **additional four parts** of the profile:

Your Baby's:

- breathing (baby's ability to move diaphragm muscles or hiccup)
 - movement
 - muscle tone (flexing of arms and legs)
 - amount of amniotic fluid surrounding the baby
- At Greenwich Hospital, the results of both tests are given to you before you leave the hospital.
 - The perinatologist will also send a report to your obstetrician.

What do the results of the biophysical profile mean?

Each of the five parts of the biophysical profile will be given a score of either 0 or 2 by the perinatologist. The total score can range from 0 to 10.

- A score of 8 or 10 is normal.
- A score of 6 is borderline. The perinatologist may want to further evaluate your baby by repeating the biophysical profile within a few days.
- A score of less than 6 is concerning. The perinatologist will evaluate each part of your profile and the related score. You may need to have additional testing or the perinatologist may determine that your baby needs to be delivered soon.

Are there any risks associated with this profile?

There are no risks to you or your baby from the biophysical profile. If you have any questions, ask to speak with your nurse or doctor.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists @ www.acog.org Retrieved March 2006.
University of Iowa Health Care @ <http://obgyn.ujhc.uiowa.edu> Retrieved March 2006.

For more Patient Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenhosp.org and Click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education