



What is the meaning of intra-uterine blood transfusion?

It is a procedure in which blood from a donor is injected into your baby.

Why is it done?

It is done when your baby has less blood/red blood cells(anemia). This can happen due to numerous reasons, like,

- a. Rh incompatibility- If the mother's blood group is Rh negative and the baby's blood group is Rh positive. The mother's antibodies destroy the red blood cells of the baby
- b. Fetal infections causing destruction of the red blood cells eg. Parvo-virus infection
- c. Defects in the process of blood cell production-Thalassemia
- d. Twin pregnancy- Monochorionic twins
- e. When fetus bleeds into the mother
- f. Placental or fetal tumors

How is it diagnosed ?

By assessing on the ultrasound the blood flow pattern in an artery (Middle cerebral artery) which supplies blood to the baby's brain or if there are other features in the baby suggestive of anemia.

So, what if the fetus is anemic? Can't we wait till delivery and then treat after the baby is born?

No, anemic fetuses left untreated progress to develop fetal hydrops (a condition wherein fluid accumulates in all the body cavities of the baby) and heart failure leading to death of the baby if not treated while in the womb.





How is the procedure done?



It involves a few steps,

- a. Arranging for 'O' negative blood tested for certain parameters and prepared for intra-uterine blood transfusion.
- b. The mother receives antibiotics half an hour before the procedure.
- c. Under ultrasound guidance, the blood is transfused into the umbilical vein of the fetus by piercing through the mother's abdomen.
- d. Thirty minutes after the procedure is completed, the fetal condition is checked and the mother is sent home.

Is it painful for me and baby?

No, it's not a painful procedure but may cause a bit of a discomfort.

Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor if any of the following occur:

- Signs of infection, including fever or chills





- Redness, swelling, increasing pain, excessive bleeding, or discharge from the needle insertion site
- You are not feeling your baby moving normally

Know the signs of early labor:

- Water breaks
- Uterine contractions
- Back pain that comes and goes
- Vaginal bleeding

If you think you have an emergency, call for medical help right away.



