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Group B Strep

What is Group B or Beta Strep?

Group B Strep (GBS) is one of the many normal bacteria that live in the human body without causing any harm. GBS develops in the intestine from time to time. It can be found in the intestine, rectum and vagina of 20-30% of the population. GBS is NOT sexually transmitted. It does not cause any symptoms in a healthy woman.

How does GBS cause infection?

At the time of delivery babies are exposed to the GBS bacteria that might be present in the mother's vagina. There is a 1 in 200 chance that an exposed newborn will get sick from the exposure. The baby could develop pneumonia or a blood infection.

How do you know if you have GBS?

Three to five weeks before your due date your practitioner will collect a culture from the vaginal and rectal area with a sterile swab.

How can infant infection from GBS be prevented?

If your GBS culture is positive your practitioner will order for you to receive IV antibiotics during labor. It is important to remember that the presence of GBS is typically not harmful to you or your baby before you are in labor.