

Small Baby Research Clinic



Welcome to the Small Baby Research Clinic. We are a specialist team from the University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian that provides high quality, evidence-based care to women, pregnant people and babies where the growth of the baby needs additional monitoring. This can be recommended for a number of reasons - if the baby has been measuring a little small, or if you have been diagnosed with a medical problem that might affect baby's growth or if you have previously had a pregnancy with a small baby.

Up to 8-10% of babies can be small. Most babies who are small in late pregnancy are well at birth and remain so after they are born. But some small babies develop difficulties in the womb and need to be delivered before their due date.

What happens at a clinic appointment?

At each appointment we perform an ultrasound scan, in order to assess baby's size (depending on when your last scan was) and we plot their weight on growth charts. We also look at the amniotic fluid around your baby, and the blood flow through their brain and the umbilical cord. In some cases, we recommend you to have electronic fetal monitoring using a computerized CTG (cardiotocography). This is similar to what women have in labour to monitor baby's heartbeat. It can tell us how the placenta is functioning and indicate baby's wellbeing.

Most babies who measure small are growing normally. However, we cannot always distinguish on ultrasound between a baby that is small but appropriately grown and a baby who has a small size due to their placenta not working as well.

The plan of your care will be explained to you at each visit. Depending on our findings, we may advise planning for an earlier delivery. Overall, we try to avoid intervening in pregnancy and we promote conservative management (avoiding invasive procedures where possible). We support shared-decision making, and every decision will be individualised to you.

If there is an increased risk of the placenta not working well, and therefore a slightly higher risk of compromise to the baby, then we may advise delivery before your due date. It is unlikely that we will recommend delivery before 37-38 weeks of pregnancy.

How is research conducted in the clinic?

Because we are committed to providing high quality care using the very latest evidence, we support a number of research studies investigating the health of babies in the womb through this clinic. This means that you will be offered information about our active studies while you are receiving care through this clinic, and will have the option to sign up for any studies you are interested in.

In some research studies, we may be evaluating new tests or treatments that could be relevant to pregnancy health and baby growth. Where a test or treatment is experimental, it will only be provided in the context of a properly regulated and ethically approved research study, with your full information and consent.

You will receive the highest standard of care in our clinic whether you choose to participate in any of our research studies or none of them.

Meet the team

The service is run by specialist obstetricians and supported by experienced midwives and consultants in fetal medicine. We also train doctors and student doctors in the clinic.

You can meet the Small Baby Research Clinic team on our website:

www.ed.ac.uk/edinburgh-pregnancy-research/about/team



You can contact the team via email: researchmidwives@nhs.scot

Or by phone: **0131 242 2480**

For immediate concerns about your health or your baby's health please contact obstetric triage on: **0131 242 2657**