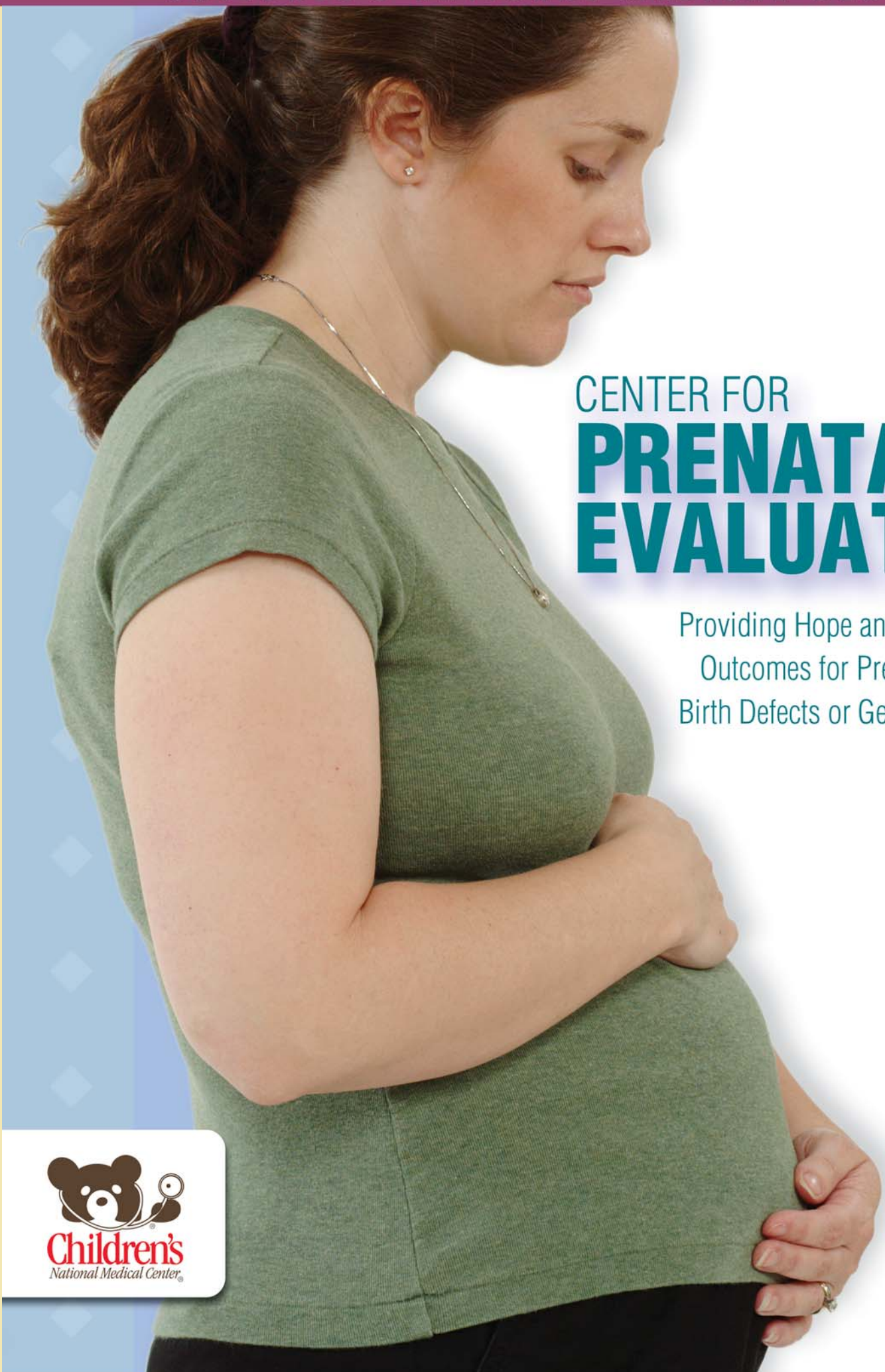
CHILDREN'S NATIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



CENTER FOR PRENATAL EVALUATION

Providing Hope and Enhancing Outcomes for Pregnancies with Birth Defects or Genetic Disorders

Children's National Medical Center

inside

Our Approach
Fetal Care Team
Coordination of Care
Family-Centered Care
Contacting the Center

Welcome to the
Center for Prenatal Evaluation

The Center for Prenatal Evaluation at Children's National Medical Center provides the most advanced care for fetuses with known or suspected abnormalities. The Center offers renowned specialists from a variety of disciplines, revolutionary technologies and an extensive, compassionate support network for families of a high-risk fetus.

The Center provides collective prenatal evaluation services not offered at any other facility in the region. Our team works with expectant families and referring physicians to plan and deliver care, as well as recommend management options for pregnancy, delivery, infancy, and childhood.

As part of one of the country's top pediatric hospitals, Children's Center for Prenatal Evaluation provides unparalleled clinical care for the full range of fetal abnormalities. The comprehensive care also includes emotional support for families.

Everyday, we work diligently to:

- Collaborate as a team to provide accurate diagnoses and advanced management for fetuses with known or suspected abnormalities.
- Provide timely, accurate information to families and their physicians.
- Partner with the medical community to ensure the highest level of care.
- Deliver compassionate care in a family-centered environment.

Our team is dedicated to providing accurate diagnoses so families are adequately prepared to select the best options. Diagnosing conditions and discussing options before the child is born increases the potential for a positive outcome.

Children are our passion, and we are working together to improve the outcomes for fetuses with a known or suspected abnormality.

Our Approach

Through the expertise of a prominent team of specialists, the Center provides families and their physicians with the information and resources necessary to manage a pregnancy when an abnormal fetus is suspected or confirmed. Since 1989, the Center for Prenatal Evaluation has worked to improve outcomes for hundreds of families before and following the birth of their child.

The team evaluates mothers who are expecting a child with a known abnormality or who may be at risk for having a child with a birth defect or genetic disorder. When treatment planning begins in utero, our team – and the family – can prepare for the specialized care the child may need immediately following delivery and throughout their life. Early intervention provides the fetus with a dedicated medical team, which ensures a continuum of care before and after

The spectrum and quality of services provided by the Center for Prenatal Evaluation are world class.

birth, and well into childhood. The team employs the most advanced diagnostic imaging techniques such as obstetric sonography, fetal MRI and fetal echocardiography. The specialists also provide genetic counseling, specialty consultation, diagnostic laboratory testing and interpretation, genetic carrier screening, prenatal management and monitoring, and coordination of neonatal care and management.

Genetic Counseling

Preliminary information and reports from prior medical or radiographic evaluations are obtained and reviewed before the patient's initial visit. A three-generation family history is performed to identify any additional risk factors.

Specialty Consultation

The Center's genetic counselors work closely with families to schedule any necessary appointments with specialists from all of Children's divisions, often within a week of the family's initial contact with the Center. Children's specialists make emergency consultations at some area delivery hospitals following delivery, as well as provide telemedicine services. Preconception counseling is also available to discuss diagnostic options.

Obstetric Sonography

Some fetuses are identified as potentially having a structural malformation and are referred to Radiology to clarify prior study findings. Utilizing the latest technology, our radiology team performs high-level obstetric sonograms for the evaluation of fetal anomalies and helps in the counseling of pregnancy management. Ultrasonography is helpful in monitoring fetal growth, as well as defining possible anatomic malformations.

Fetal MRI

Fetal MRI can complement fetal ultrasonography in the evaluation of fetal anomalies. Images are quickly obtained without the use of sedation and provide exquisite detail that multiple experts can review. Children's National Medical Center is one of the few centers nationally that provides combined fetal ultrasound and MR imaging.

Our adherence to advanced treatment guidelines and utilization of state-of-the-art technology result in phenomenal care and outcomes for patients.

Fetal Echocardiography and the Fetal Heart Program

Fetal echocardiography is used to define cardiac anatomy, as well as diagnose and manage congenital heart diseases and rhythm disturbances in utero. The Children's National Heart Institute Fetal Heart Program is the preeminent provider of fetal cardiac services in the region. The program is led by an expert in fetal cardiovascular care and is supported by a team of specialists that includes a world-renowned surgeon and experienced physicians who provide a variety of cardiac services including electrophysiology, interventional catheterization and congenital heart surgery. The Center for Prenatal Evaluation and the Children's National Heart Institute collaborate to provide fetal echocardiography services and ongoing management through the pregnancy of fetuses with congenital heart disease.

Diagnostic Laboratory Testing and Interpretation

The Center assists in the interpretation of prenatal screening studies, recommends additional testing if necessary and further refines the risk for birth defects. For at-risk families identified because of a positive family history or because of a prior affected child, the Center offers molecular (DNA) analysis for a range of genetic conditions.

Genetic Carrier Screening

The Center offers genetic counseling and carrier screening for individuals of high-risk populations, including those of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry (Tay Sachs or others), Mediterranean descent (thalassemia), African American ancestry (hemoglobinopathies), and Northern Europeans (cystic fibrosis).

Prenatal Management and Monitoring

Upon request from referring physicians, the level of Center involvement is increased to meet the specific patient needs. This may involve a change in delivery hospital to allow for direct access to a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and the development of a management plan for the neonatal staff at the delivery hospital. Communicating information prior to a child's birth helps to minimize stress and unfamiliar territory for families.

Coordination of Postnatal Care and Management

The team often provides comprehensive coordination of postnatal care for the newborn. As a non-delivery facility, Children's team can manage the transport process of the newborn to the NICU, if necessary. The transport team uses highly sophisticated equipment, providing care as if the infant were in the NICU. The NICU is the region's only Level IIID unit, and is managed by world-renowned neonatal specialists.

Fetal Care Team

Fetuses with a known or suspected abnormality often require consultation and treatment by doctors highly trained in a specialty. Children's boasts many renowned pediatric and fetal subspecialists, including radiologists, cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, and geneticists, to care for children with congenital disorders. As a patient of the Center for Prenatal Evaluation, families and referring physicians have access to this elite medical team of prenatal and postnatal specialists.

A cornerstone of the Center for Prenatal Evaluation is the Fetal Care Team, which meets regularly and includes representatives from Cardiology, Medical Genetics, Neonatology, Nephrology, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedics, Plastic Surgery, Radiology, General Surgery, and Urology. Area perinatologists and obstetricians are invited to attend the meetings to provide obstetric management input. The Board is unique in the region, with no other prenatal program drawing on the coordinated expertise of such a large and diverse group of medical specialists.

The Care Team members discuss and recommend management options, then provide families with a coordinated plan of treatment. This integrated, multidisciplinary approach to care, coupled with ongoing research and cutting-edge technologies, helps to provide the most positive outcome for a child.

Appointments with necessary members of the specialty team can be scheduled at one site, often on one day, ensuring convenience for our patients. Once diagnostic tests and face-to-face meetings with specialists are complete, a genetic counselor meets with patients to explain results, discuss diagnoses, provide information about near and long-term outcomes, outline management options and recommend postnatal care, provide counseling, and answer questions. The team of specialists provides all of the information necessary for the family to make informed, personal decisions about treatment and options.

Our group of experts is dedicated to working collaboratively to coordinate the most advanced fetal care.

Coordination of Care

The Center provides obstetricians, maternal-fetal specialists, perinatologists, and neonatologists with access to a wealth of resources, as well as peace of mind in knowing that their patients will receive the highest standard of care. Communication and collaboration with our medical partners is paramount to successful outcomes.

Our team works diligently to ensure that the patient's primary obstetric care providers receive reports generated as a result of visits, with recommendations to supplement the management of their patient's healthcare needs. As a non-delivery facility, Children's team works closely with the mother's obstetrician and/or perinatologist to plan the most appropriate prenatal, delivery and postnatal care. This close collaboration with medical partners optimizes the patient's care and ensures the patient's entire continuum of care is seamless.

We are dedicated to providing families and their physicians with the information and resources necessary to manage their pregnancy.

Family-Centered Care

In a continuous effort to better serve families, our team realizes that the best medical care in the world is not enough when it comes to total patient satisfaction. The Center for Prenatal Evaluation provides the highest standard of family-centered care, and coordination of care in a compassionate setting is what each family can expect when working with the Children's team.

Families work closely with a genetic coordinator who facilitates counseling, evaluations, appointments with medical staff, communications with the primary care physician, and meetings to discuss treatment options. Often these services are coordinated within a one-day visit to Children's.

By meeting with the members of the medical team who may care for their child after delivery, families can better prepare for the specialized treatment their child may need during infancy or childhood. This medical team is dedicated to the care of the patient well into childhood.

Children's also offers Concierge Services to provide support to families during their visit. The services provided by the Concierge team are limited only by a family's needs, but often include travel and lodging arrangements and other non-medical needs. Our team goes above and beyond every day to ensure a healthy future for children - one child at a time.

Coordinating care in a compassionate setting.

Contacting the Center for Prenatal Evaluation

The Center for Prenatal Evaluation team provides hope and the highest level of care for families with fetuses with a known or suspected abnormality. Our team is dedicated to providing the unparalleled expertise found only at Children's National Medical Center, which has a reputation that attracts patients from around the world.

One call provides families and physicians with access to all of Children's prenatal services. For more information about the Center for Prenatal Evaluation, or to make an appointment or referral, contact us at 202-884-4166 or visit www.dcchildrens.com.

Children's National Medical Center
Center for Prenatal Evaluation
111 Michigan Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20010
Phone: 202-884-4166