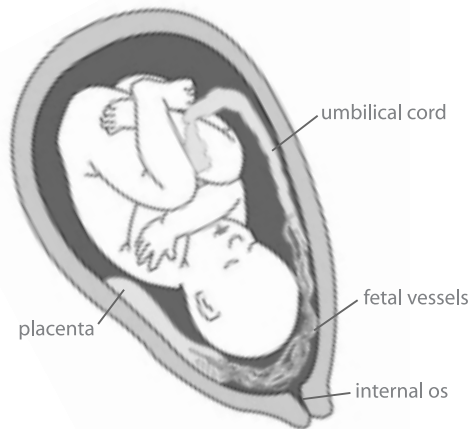


Dreams of a healthy baby can be shattered by vasa previa, a dangerous condition that must be diagnosed before the onset of labor.

WHAT IS VASA PREVIA?

Vasa previa occurs when one or more of the baby's placental or umbilical blood vessels cross the entrance to the birth canal beneath the baby.



When the cervix dilates or the membranes rupture, the unprotected vessels can tear, causing rapid fetal hemorrhage.

When the baby drops into the pelvis, the vessels can be compressed, compromising the baby's blood supply and causing oxygen deprivation.

OCCURRENCE

Vasa previa occurs in 1:2500 births. The fetal mortality rate is estimated to be as high as 95% if the condition is not prenatally diagnosed.

DIAGNOSING VASA PREVIA

Specific ultrasound screening is the key to diagnosing vasa previa.

The International Vasa Previa Foundation (IVPF) believes that women with the following conditions are at risk and should be investigated with transvaginal color Doppler ultrasound:

- low-lying placenta or placenta previa
- bilobed or succenturiate-lobed placenta
- velamentous insertion of the cord
- in-vitro fertilization pregnancies
- multiple pregnancies
- history of uterine surgery or D&C
- painless bleeding

The International Vasa Previa Foundation supports making color Doppler scanning of the placental-umbilical cord connection standard practice during all routine obstetrical ultrasounds.

When vasa previa is prenatally diagnosed, the chances of the baby surviving are very good. The fetal mortality rate is very low when a Cesarean section is performed at 35 weeks.

WHAT IS TRANSVAGINAL COLOR DOPPLER ULTRASOUND?

Transvaginal ultrasound is used to view aberrant vessels crossing the cervix.

Color Doppler ultrasound is used to measure the velocity of blood flow.

Color Doppler ultrasound can be used to listen to the fetal heartbeat, examine the fetal heart for defects, and estimate placental blood flow.

During this type of ultrasound, distinct colors show the different rates of blood flow.

The colors show the location of fetal vessels thereby eliminating or confirming the diagnosis of vasa previa.

UNDIAGNOSED SITUATIONS

If bleeding occurs, the source of blood should be investigated with a blood test to determine whether it is maternal or fetal, provided the baby is not in distress.

In cases of significant blood loss, and/or an abnormal fetal heart rate, emergency Cesarean section and blood transfusions have been shown to increase the survival rate for these babies.

The IVPF encourages examination of the internal os prior to artificially breaking the amniotic membranes.



AN AVOIDABLE TRAGEDY

The International Vasa Previa Foundation believes that infant death due to vasa previa is an avoidable tragedy. The technology exists to detect vasa previa, but it is rarely diagnosed because prenatal screening for the condition is not the standard of care. However, infant death and injury are preventable when vasa previa is prenatally diagnosed.

International Vasa Previa Foundation members are working to create a world without vasa previa deaths by raising awareness of the condition. Members are parents, relatives, and friends of vasa previa survivors and vasa previa angels, as well as medical professionals and concerned people around the world.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**

<http://www.vasaprevia.org>

The IVPF website provides a valuable service through its:

- Resource materials
- Live chats
- Forums
- Personal stories
- Website links
- E-mail groups

To help us raise awareness of vasa previa, please send your tax-deductible donations to:

**International Vasa Previa Foundation, Inc.
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Boca Raton, FL 33427-2293**

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**International
Vasa Previa
Foundation**

*It only takes a moment
to diagnose life...*

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