

Group B Streptococcus (GBS)

Group B streptococcus (GBS) is a type of bacteria found in the bowel of up to 35 out of 100 healthy adults. In women, GBS can also be found in the vagina and bladder. Although similar in name, GBS is different from group A strep, the bacteria that causes strep throat.

Colonized GBS

If your body carries GBS but shows no sign of infection is said to be “colonized.” In some cases, GBS can invade your body and cause a serious infection. It can occur in the elderly or in those with chronic health issues. If you are pregnant and you have colonized GBS, you can pass it to your baby during childbirth.

GBS Screening

If you are pregnant, you will get screened for group B strep during your pregnancy. You will have a vaginal and rectal culture around the 35th week of pregnancy. If you have GBS, you will receive antibiotics during labor to help prevent GBS from being passed to your baby. GBS is common in pregnancy. If you have any questions about GBS, please ask at your next prenatal visit.

Infants with GBS

Most babies who get group B strep from their mothers do not have any problems. Every year about 1-2 out of 100 babies born will develop serious GBS disease. This includes sepsis (blood infections), meningitis (infection of the fluid and lining around the brain) and pneumonia. Serious GBS disease could lead to death or long-term problems such as hearing and vision problems.

Who to Call

If you have any further questions, please contact your closest Ob-Gyn clinic.

20 S. Park St. Clinic*
20 S. Park St., Suite 307 & 506
Madison, WI 53715
(608) 287-2830

Arboretum Ob-Gyn Resident
Physician Clinic
1102 S. Park St.
Madison, WI 53715
(608) 287-5898

Union Corners Clinic*
2402 Winnebago St.
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 242-6840

West Clinic*
451 Junction Rd.
Madison, WI 53717
(608) 265-7601

*Location includes Midwifery clinic