

HOW TO NAVIGATE BIRTH ANOMALIES DURING PREGNANCY



Angela Colin —



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Atlantic Fetal Diagnostic and Treatment Center offers support, expertise and answers

Discovering that your unborn baby has a potential birth defect brings a lot of emotions and even more questions. Which specialists will I need to see? How can I get the best possible outcome for my baby? What will life look like after my child is born? Finding answers can be difficult.

Thankfully, expectant parents in New Jersey have a place where they can find the guidance, expertise and support they need to help them navigate care during their pregnancy and beyond. The Atlantic Fetal Diagnostic and Treatment Center is the only center in the region that offers a comprehensive program specifically designed to help children with birth anomalies.

The center — which is led by maternal-fetal medicine specialist Karen Russo Stieglitz, MD (board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology and maternal and fetal medicine by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology) and neonatologist Amy Lynn Presti, MD (board-certified in neonatal-perinatal medicine and pediatrics by the American Board of Pediatrics)— brings together high-risk pregnancy experts, genetic counselors, neonatologists and pediatric subspecialists to give infants the most complete prenatal and postnatal care possible.

“Parents of unborn children with birth anomalies already have a lot on their minds and on their plates,” says Angela Colin, who helps families navigate through the center. “We connect them with the right medical providers, answer their questions about their care and insurance coverage, and make sure moms get everything they need.”

FINDING BIRTH ANOMALIES

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in every 33 babies is born with a birth anomaly. Most anomalies are found on either 12-week or 20-week ultrasounds. To help parents get the most accurate diagnoses possible, the Fetal Diagnostic and Treatment Center uses sophisticated, high-resolution ultrasound equipment.

After diagnosis, moms receiving care through the center will meet with a board-certified specialist from Atlantic Maternal-Fetal Medicine. Next, a genetic counselor will help coordinate any additional prenatal consultations needed with the appropriate specialists.

“For a baby diagnosed with a hole in the diaphragm, for example, we may recommend genetic testing and consultations with a pediatric surgeon and neonatologist so we can be sure the infant gets the surgery he or she needs shortly after birth,” Colin says.

ADVANCED EXPERTISE

Board-certified maternal-fetal medicine specialists with advanced training in managing complicated pregnancies



100+

Prenatal consultations with 100+ pediatric subspecialists

HOW DOES OUR CENTER HELP FAMILIES?



From the time of your first appointment, a care navigator will coordinate your prenatal experience — answer your questions, address your concerns and connect you to professionals for ongoing support to help create the best possible outcomes for you, your family and your baby.



The center's care team will work hand-in-hand with your primary OB. When appropriate, we will refer you back to your OB so you can deliver your baby in your own community.



The center offers state-of-the-art fetal imaging technology.



If we anticipate that your baby will need highly specialized care after birth, we may recommend delivery at Morristown Medical Center with access to Sam's NICU, one of the leading Neonatal Intensive Care Units in the country.

For other conditions, the center's team may connect patients with pediatric cardiologists, endocrinologists, orthopedic surgeons and other subspecialists who can provide the most appropriate clinical guidance.

KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON YOU AND YOUR BABY

In addition to keeping families updated on their baby's progress during and after pregnancy, the center's staff communicates regularly with obstetricians and subspecialists to provide the most coordinated care possible.

Parents using the center's expertise will always have the option to work with their local obstetrician and to give birth at their hospital of choice. For parents who live in North Jersey, the center's team may recommend giving birth at Morristown Medical Center, which is nationally recognized

by *U.S. News & World Report* as a top 30 hospital in the U.S. for obstetrics and gynecology. If a higher level of care is needed, your delivery may take place at Sam's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), one of the nation's top-ranked NICUs, located at Goryeb Children's Hospital.

Anyone can access the services of the Atlantic Fetal Diagnostic and Treatment Center, which sees patients at Atlantic Maternal-Fetal Medicine locations in Bridgewater, Morristown, Newton, Pompton Plains, Rockaway and Summit. 

To learn more, visit atlantichealth.org/fetalcenter.