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26/08/2025 — DR. DEEPTI MITTAL

How Growth Scan Shows Baby's Health and Development

Pregnancy is a journey filled with anticipation and excitement, coupled with concerns about your baby's well-being. Among the essential tools to monitor fetal health, the **growth scan**—also known as a fetal growth ultrasound—stands out for its ability to provide detailed insights into your baby's development and overall condition.

Why Is It an Important Scan?

Growth scans go beyond just estimating your baby's size. They:

- Detect potential problems early, allowing for timely interventions.
- Check specific health indicators to ensure proper fetal development.
- Help manage **high-risk pregnancies**, such as those with complications like diabetes, hypertension, or twins.

How Many Times is the Scan Needed?

Typically, a standard growth scan is performed once between 28–32 weeks of pregnancy, but your doctor may recommend more frequent scans if:

- There is a **high-risk pregnancy** (e.g., gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia).
- Previous scans have shown concerns.
- There are issues like reduced fetal growth, abnormal fundal height, or concerns about amniotic fluid.

Here's How Growth Scans Assess Your Baby's Well-Being:

Fetal Growth and Size:

Growth scans use ultrasound measurements (like head circumference, abdominal circumference, and femur length) to:

- Estimate fetal weight.
- Track growth trends over time.
- Detect growth restriction or excessive growth, which may signal underlying health concerns.

Amniotic Fluid Levels:

This scan assesses the amniotic fluid index (AFI), indicating if there's:

- Too little fluid (oligohydramnios)—linked to placental issues or fetal urinary problems.
- Too much fluid (polyhydramnios)—associated with maternal diabetes or fetal swallowing difficulties.

Placental Function and Position

It evaluates:

- Placental placement (anterior, posterior, or low-lying).
- Any signs of placental insufficiency.
- The blood flow from mother to baby, often through **Doppler studies**, which can signal potential complications.

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Fetal Activity and Movement:

During the scan, the fetal heartbeat, breathing movements, and physical activities (like limb movements) are observed, indicating fetal well-being and neurological status.

Other Important Information:

Growth scans can also:

- Detect structural abnormalities that manifest late in pregnancy.
- Guide the management of twins or multiple pregnancies through individual assessment.
- Offer reassurance and allow for advance planning in case of detected anomalies.

Other Issues or Red Flags Detected:

A growth scan may identify issues such as:

- Intrauterine Growth Restriction (IUGR): Baby is not growing as expected.
- Reduced or excessive amniotic fluid.
- Abnormal umbilical cord blood flow.
- Unusual fetal positioning or movement patterns.
- Structural issues in organs or limbs.

If the Scan Reveals Concerning Findings

If anything abnormal is detected, your doctor may:

- Recommend additional scans for closer monitoring.
- Suggest specialized tests (like Doppler ultrasounds or [fetal echocardiography](#)).
- Initiate interventions, adjust your care plan, or refer to a fetal medicine specialist.

For expert guidance and a personalized approach, schedule a visit with [Dr. Deepti Mittal](#)—an experienced [Fetal Medicine Specialist in Pune](#), dedicated to ensuring the best outcomes for mother and baby.

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