

# Questions to ask at your ultrasound



**Boston  
Children's  
Hospital**

**Heart  
Center**

Until every child is well™

## Six things you need to know about your baby's heart

When viewed as a whole, heart defects are the most common type of birth defect. In some cases, ultrasound examinations can detect heart defects while the baby is still in the womb, which can lead to earlier treatment and support for parents and their unborn baby.

Here are questions you should ask the person performing your 18- to 20-week ultrasound to determine if your baby's heart is normal or if there is a heart defect.

1. Do you see four chambers in the baby's heart?  
 Yes  No
2. Are there two upper chambers (left and right atria), each with a valve controlling blood flow out of them?  
 Yes  No
3. Are there two lower chambers (left and right ventricles), each with a valve controlling blood flow out of them?  
 Yes  No
4. Do the two vessels leaving the heart (aorta and pulmonary artery) cross each other as they exit?  
 Yes  No
5. Is the wall between the two lower chambers intact, without any holes?  
 Yes  No
6. Is everything else in the heart normal?  
 Yes  No

If your ultrasound shows a possible heart defect, speak to your obstetrician about being referred to a fetal cardiologist as soon as possible.

Boston Children's Hospital's fetal cardiologists are available to diagnose potential heart defects, provide treatment when appropriate and educate families about long-term implications of a heart condition. Please call 617-355-1499 anytime to be put in touch with one of our experts or visit us at [bostonchildrens.org/fetalheart](http://bostonchildrens.org/fetalheart).