

## Advanced genetic tests spot more defects before birth

Birth defects can be spotted more precisely with advanced genetic tests that are performed on a fetus than with current prenatal tests, and may help pinpoint abnormalities that cause stillbirths, researchers said.

Two studies published yesterday in the New England Journal of Medicine suggest the tests called chromosomal microarrays could become standard for women with high-risk pregnancies. They may eventually be offered to all pregnant women, said Ronald Wapner, vice chairman of research at Columbia University Medical Center's department of obstetrics and gynecology in New York.

The microarray tests are widely used to diagnose problems in newborns with developmental delays, autism disorders or congenital anomalies, Lorraine Dugoff, a physician and associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Pennsylvania, wrote in an editorial accompanying the studies. The question is when the sensitive tests should be given because doctors don't know the significance of everything they find.

**View the original article here: [Advanced Genetic Tests Spot More Defects Before Birth](#)**