



THALASSEMIAS AND HEMOGLOBINOPATHIES

Alpha Thalassemia Trait / Alpha Thalassemia Minor

What is Alpha Thalassemia Trait / Alpha Thalassemia Minor?

The child's newborn screening test identified him/her as a possible carrier of Alpha Thalassemia, also referred to as Alpha Thalassemia Trait/Minor.



CLINICAL EXPECTATIONS FOR CARRIERS OF ALPHA THALASSEMIA

Being a carrier of Alpha Thalassemia will not have an adverse influence on this child's life expectancy. The trait is basically silent and carriers are not more likely to get sick than any other child. In most cases, children are symptom-free and will have normal growth and development, hence do not need special medical care. Rarely, carriers can manifest with mild anemia.



REPRODUCTIVE RISKS

The results indicate that the child is a carrier of Alpha Thalassemia. It is important to remember that the trait may be transmitted by the patient to his/her would-be children. Thus, it is extremely important to have his/her future partner screened for the hemoglobin disorders as their union may result in a baby with a more severe form of alpha thalassemia. Also, in a population with high incidence of Hemoglobin E disease and beta thalassemia, co-inheritance with these conditions may present with more severe anemia. Family members of this child may also be at-risk for alpha thalassemia.

References:

Gepte, MB., Naranjo, ML., Bahjin, RR., De Castro, Jr. R., Fajardo, P., Maceda EB., Paclibar MLF. (2022, October) Disorder[Thalassemias Experts Committee Session]. Newborn Screening Reference Center, National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila.

Important Considerations

- Coordination with a pediatric hematologist is advised to evaluate iron status of the patient before giving empiric iron supplements.
- Immunizations are not contraindicated for this condition and may be given as recommended by the Philippine Pediatric Society.

Note

Parents or hematologists may opt for genotyping but this will not be covered by the Newborn Screening program and is at the own expense of the patients. This may be taken into account when counseling is done by the pediatrician/hematologist.

