

The Fetal-Maternal Center at Children's Hospital Los Angeles is one of the few programs in the nation providing comprehensive care for expectant mothers experiencing high-risk pregnancies. The Center—part of the hospital's Fetal and Neonatal Institute—treats approximately 1,300 patients every year through expert diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and personalized post-birth planning.

At the Center, perinatologists, fetal surgeons, neonatologists, fetal cardiologists and nurse care managers from Children's Hospital Los Angeles and Keck Medicine of USC work together to provide the most advanced and supportive care for mothers and their unborn babies. The Center has an extensive team of pediatric specialists who address the care needs of babies diagnosed with a health condition in utero. Our team also coordinates with obstetricians and delivery hospitals to meet the needs of expectant mothers and their medically fragile infants.

Every patient in the Fetal-Maternal Center is paired with a nurse care manager, who oversees each step of the health care journey. Nurse care managers answer questions, provide support and coordinate the numerous appointments an expectant mother may need. Many patients require care from two or more specialized doctors. Nurse care managers organize all of these services, helping ease the stress and burden on families.

For the most high-risk pregnancies, the baby's first hours of life after birth are critical. Having the right team ready and available can impact a child's future health. The Center carefully plans and coordinates care that begins during the first hours after birth and, if needed, extends until the newborn is transferred to Children's Hospital Los Angeles for continued treatment.

PROGRAMS AND CENTERS

Fetal Surgery

Through a partnership with Los Angeles Fetal Surgery, the Fetal-Maternal Center offers a range of life-changing and often lifesaving fetal surgical interventions available at very few other institutions. Our fetal surgeons are among the best in the country. They pursue innovative research to advance the field and get exceptional surgical results. Los Angeles Fetal Surgery is one of only two centers in the nation to offer in-utero percutaneous spina bifida repair, a complex procedure to treat this birth defect affecting the spinal cord. Our surgeons perform more than 150 fetal surgeries per year and collaborate with specialists throughout the hospital to treat conditions such as cardiac abnormalities, fetal growth restrictions, urological conditions, genetic disorders and chromosome problems.

Fetal Imaging

At the Fetal-Maternal Center, we use some of the most advanced prenatal diagnostic tools available. These help doctors gather information needed to create a personalized treatment plan for each expectant mother and her baby. We offer fetal magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), a specialized test that is rarely available elsewhere. In addition, imaging options such as 3D ultrasound and fetal echocardiograms allow for more accurate pictures of a fetus, which helps our physicians diagnose prenatal conditions and tailor treatments that can lead to improved outcomes.

Specialized Neonatal Care

Most babies identified prenatally as having a serious health condition will need specialized health care after birth. Children's Hospital Los Angeles provides leading-edge treatments for newborns with complex health issues. Infants in the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit (NICCU), a Level IV neonatal intensive care unit, receive the highest level of care possible from an interdisciplinary team of clinicians. For babies born with a heart defect, the Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit and Cardiovascular Acute Unit provide a dedicated space for them to receive specialized care before and after procedures.

WHY CHOOSE US

The Fetal-Maternal Center has one of the country's most innovative models of care for treating maternal-fetal and neonatal problems. Our experts are equipped to address complex medical, genetic, metabolic and developmental disorders in infants diagnosed in utero, all in a supportive, family-friendly environment.

- The Fetal-Maternal Center integrates unique infant-family mental health support beginning when a child is diagnosed with a condition in utero. Mental health experts help parents build resilience and prepare to bond with their child after birth. Once a baby is born and admitted to Children's Hospital, mental health specialists continue to work with families, helping them understand their newborn's cues and learn soothing techniques, and addressing any mental health symptoms that could impact the parents' relationship with their child.
- Prenatal testing can screen for genetic disorders before a baby is born. The hospital's on-site genetic testing lab gets accurate test results much faster than other centers. Our specially-trained genetic counselors clearly explain test results and treatment options to parents.
- Experts in the Fetal-Maternal Center provide evidenced-based care guided by the latest research. Researchers and physician-scientists conduct investigations aimed at developing new therapies to improve long-term outcomes for babies with complex health conditions. The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles is one of the nation's largest and most productive pediatric research facilities devoted to children, where investigators collaborate on a wide range of studies, including those focused on maternal, fetal and neonatal health.
- The Fetal and Neonatal Institute, which houses the Fetal-Maternal Center, is consistently recognized as a top 10 neonatology program by U.S. News & World Report, which assesses a program's clinical volumes, quality of care, infection rates, availability of advanced technologies and family support.

REFERRALS, ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES

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