

**December 15, 2021, Washington, DC.** - The Coalition for Access to Prenatal Screening (CAPS) is encouraged by New York State Medicaid's expansion of coverage for cell-free DNA (cfDNA)-based noninvasive prenatal screening (NIPS) from women over age 35 to women over age 30, though more work needs to be done to ensure all women who choose to pursue screening can do so. CAPS is dedicated to working with the Department of Health to improve access to NIPS regardless of their risk factors, income, and age.

NIPS represents a major advance in screening for fetal chromosomal aneuploidies through the analysis of millions of cfDNA fragments in the blood of a pregnant woman. Chromosomal aneuploidies are characterized by an abnormal number of chromosomes, which may cause genetic disorders in a newborn baby, including some birth defects. Prenatal screening for chromosomal aneuploidies using analysis of serum proteins has been the standard of care for decades. However, cfDNA-based NIPS has become the preferred method of prenatal screening for many healthcare providers and patients since its introduction to clinical practice in 2011.

Numerous professional organizations, including the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), the International Society for Prenatal Diagnosis (ISPD), the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG), and the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) have recognized cfDNA-based NIPS as a screening option for all pregnancies, given appropriate patient counseling regarding the performance, risks and benefits of such testing.

We look forward to working with the New York State Medicaid and the Department of Health to further expand its policy to ensure all women in the state received comprehensive prenatal care.

To learn more about cfDNA-based NIPS and CAPS, visit <https://capsprenatal.com/>.