

CAPS applauds TRICARE for expanding access to NIPT for all women who chose screening, without restrictions related to age or other risk factors.

February 15, 2024, Washington, DC. - The Coalition for Access to Prenatal Screening (CAPS) applauds TRICARE's expansion and modernization of coverage for cell-free DNA (cfDNA)-based noninvasive prenatal screening (NIPT) to all women regardless of their risk factors, income, or age, with no prior authorization. With this NIPT policy update, all servicemembers and their families will have improved access to prenatal care within TRICARE.

NIPT represents a major advancement in screening for common fetal chromosomal aneuploidies through the analysis of millions of cfDNA fragments in the blood of a pregnant person. 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 NIPT 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 NIPT as a screening option for all pregnancies, given appropriate patient counseling regarding the performance, risks and benefits of such testing.

TRICARE joins 34 state Medicaid programs and 95 percent of commercial health plans in providing access to NIPT and improving maternal health in the United States. We look forward to working with other stakeholders, including state Medicaid programs and commercial health plans, to further expand their policies to ensure all pregnant people in the country receive modernized prenatal care.

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