

Fetal Medicine Foundation First Trimester Screening Programme



Director of Ultrasound: Kypros Nicolaides
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Dear Colleague

The new version of the Fetal Medicine Foundation First Trimester Screening (FMF FTS) risk calculation programme is in the final stages of testing and due for release in October. It is anticipated that all users of the current FMF FTS programme will switch over to the new programme by 31st December – when the existing programme will stop calculating risks.

The new programme will provide:

- A new NT distribution and NT related likelihood ratio
- Calculation of risk based on the presence or absence of the nasal bone
- Adjustment of results from biochemical testing based on ethnic origin, diabetes, smoking and assisted reproduction therapy
- Calculation of risk based on free β -hCG and PAPP-A measured at any time between 8 and 14 weeks
- Copy of the new 11-13⁺⁶ weeks book

In order to make use of newer programming techniques, the software has been rebuilt and on this occasion we cannot simply provide you with a “patch” to upgrade the old programme. Instead, we will be giving you a new CD and unfortunately your old patient data cannot be transferred. However on this occasion we are sure that the improvements to the programme will outweigh this inconvenience.

We anticipate that there will also be additions and modifications that we will want to make to the programme in the future and to enable us to do this with a simple “upgrade” the new programme includes a Sybase Anywhere 9 license. As well as making upgrades very easy, the Sybase Anywhere license allows the programme to run in most languages and avoids the inconvenience of having to use the English setting on your set-up as is required in the current programme. This is a commercial license that normally retails at 500 euros, but our programme developers have been able to arrange a special deal to keep the cost to an absolute minimum. Given that the FMF subsidises the FTS programme so heavily already, we do not feel that we are in a position to meet this new cost ourselves and have made the very difficult decision to pass the fee (50 euros) to our programme users. We have always maintained that our programme is available free-of-charge and hope that you will understand that this one off payment for the Sybase Anywhere license fee is unavoidable.

Please send the payment to the Fetal Medicine Foundation (50 euros or £35). Payments can be made by cash, cheque or bankers draft. These payments should be clearly identified as the Sybase license fee and whom it is from. We will send a receipt to you with the new programme. Unfortunately we cannot dispatch the programme until we have the license fee.

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Several of our programme users use the Fetal Databases supplied by ViewPoint and Astraia, in addition to the FMF FTS programme. Please be reassured that both of these companies have worked with us to include all the recent changes and you will receive an upgrade directly from them. The Sybase Anywhere license or equivalent is already included in these versions and the license fee as has already been charged as part of the overall cost of the programme, so if you do use one of these commercial packages you are not required to send in an additional fee and will be contacted directly by the software company regarding the upgrade.

The new programme is a very exciting development for the FMF, although we do recognise that the installation of the new programme is a testing time for all concerned. Please help us to be as efficient as possible and send in your license fee promptly.

Best wishes,

Dr Victoria Heath
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