

One estimate places the incidence of VACTERL association at 1.6 per 10,000 live births. The true frequency of may be difficult to determine because many cases may be misdiagnosed or undiagnosed, especially children with fewer problems. Although many features of VACTERL association are apparent at birth, some features will not be apparent for weeks, months, or perhaps years. The recurrence risk of VACTERL association for parents with one affected child is about two-three percent. No specific test is actually available for prenatal diagnosis, although fetal ultrasound scan may be of some help to exclude recurrence. Because the cause of VACTERL association is unknown, no laboratory test exists that can diagnose or rule out VACTERL association. The diagnosis is a clinical diagnosis based on the features seen. It may take some time to do all the testing necessary to make a diagnosis of VACTERL association. A diagnosis may be made based upon a complete physical exam and a variety of specialized tests that look for the major and minor features of VACTERL association listed above.