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Home Illnesses and conditions Chromosomal conditions Patau’s syndrome Patau’s syndrome, also known as Trisomy 13, is a rare but serious genetic condition. It begins to affect babies when they’re in the womb, and will continue to cause health problems throughout their life. In the UK, around 2 in every 10,000 births are affected by Patau’s syndrome. When a baby is conceived (made), they inherit genetic material from both their parents. This genetic material is called a chromosome. Humans normally have 23 pairs of chromosomes. In each pair, 1 of the chromosomes is inherited from the mother and 1 is inherited from the father. If a baby has Patau’s syndrome, they have inherited an extra copy of chromosome 13. This extra copy can be present in some or all of the baby’s cells and can lead to health problems for the baby. There are 3 different forms of Patau’s syndrome: In full form Patau’s syndrome, the baby has inherited a complete extra copy of chromosome 13. This extra copy is present in all of the baby’s cells. Around 80% of babies born with Patau’s syndrome have the full form of the syndrome. In mosaic form Patau’s syndrome, the baby has inherited a complete extra copy of chromosome 13, but the copy is only present in some of the baby’s cells. In partial form Patau’s syndrome, the baby has only inherited part of an extra copy of chromosome 13. This is a very rare form of Patau’s syndrome. Most cases result from a random change in the egg or sperm in healthy parents. This change is not caused by anything the parents did before or during pregnancy. You’ll be offered screening for Patau’s syndrome when you’re between 11 and 14 weeks pregnant. The screening test will show if your baby has a high or low chance of having Patau’s syndrome. If screening shows that there’s a high chance your baby has Patau’s syndrome, you can choose to have a further diagnostic test if you wish. No test can tell if your baby has full, mosaic or partial Patau’s syndrome, or how they’ll be affected. Around 7 in 10 (70%) of pregnancies diagnosed with Patau’s syndrome from screening tests will end in miscarriage or stillbirth. The risk of miscarriage decreases as the pregnancy progresses, but there’s still a risk of stillbirth. If your baby is affected by Patau’s syndrome, it’s likely they will have some health conditions. Exactly how your baby is affected will depend on the form of Patau’s syndrome they have. Full form Patau’s syndrome is considered to be a life-limiting condition. This means it can affect how long a baby can live. Around 4 in 10 (43.1%) babies with full form Patau’s syndrome will live longer than 1 week. Around 1 in 10 (9.7%) will live longer than 5 years.