Sickle Cell Trait (AS) is an inherited condition which affects the hemoglobin in your red blood cells.

It is important to know if you have sickle cell trait. Sickle cell trait is inherited from your parents, like hair or eye color. If one parent has sickle cell trait, there is a 50% (1 in 2) chance with each pregnancy of having a child with sickle cell trait. Sickle cell trait rarely causes any health problems. Some people may develop health problems under certain conditions, such as:

- Dehydration – from not drinking enough water
- Low oxygen – from over-exertion
- High altitudes – from low oxygen levels

A simple blood test called a hemoglobin electrophoresis can determine your sickle cell status. Talk with your healthcare provider if you have more questions about sickle cell trait or want to be tested.

It is important to know if you have sickle cell trait (are a sickle cell carrier) before you decide to have children.

Who can have sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait?

- It is estimated that SCD affects 90,000 to 100,000 people in the United States, mainly Blacks or African Americans.
- The disease occurs in about 1 of every 500 Black or African American births and in about 1 of every 36,000 Hispanic American births.
- SCD affects millions of people throughout the world and is particularly common among those whose ancestors come from sub-Saharan Africa, regions in the Western Hemisphere (South America, the Caribbean, and Central America), Saudi Arabia, India, and Mediterranean countries such as Turkey, Greece, and Italy.
- About 1 of every 12 African Americans has sickle cell trait and about 1 of every 100 Hispanics has sickle cell trait.
- It is possible for a person of any race or nationality to have sickle cell trait.

Contact us for more information:

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Jaundice
This is a yellowing of the eyes and skin. It is painless and occurs because of rapid breakdown and death of sickled red blood cells.

Leg Ulcers
Poor circulation due to blockage of blood vessels by sickle cells can lead to sores that are difficult to heal. These often occur around the ankles.

Complications During Pregnancy
A woman with sickle cell disease can have a healthy baby. However, risks are involved; both she and the baby should be closely monitored by a healthcare provider. Prenatal care is very important!

Other problems include:
» chest pain and trouble breathing
» organ damage
» gallstones
» blood in the urine
» eye disease
» painful erections in men

How is sickle cell disease managed?
Individuals with sickle cell disease should receive regular medical care from a hematologist and a general medical care provider.

Routine care is very important!

Treatments may include a medication called hydroxyurea which increases the body’s level of fetal hemoglobin which prevents sickling, as well as antibiotics for infections or prevention of infections, and medicines for painful events.

Everyone should eat a balanced diet, and receive regular check-ups and immunizations. Children with sickle cell disease require a few special immunizations. A yearly flu shot is also recommended.