

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Rachel Franklin, MD

ATTN: Courtney Fischer, Publicist

St. Martin's Press

Email: Courtney.fischer@stmartins.com

Brfranklin1@cox.net

## SIMPLE NEW TEST PREDICTS PRETERM LABOR, RELIEVES ANXIETY IN HIGH RISK PREGNANT WOMEN

(Oklahoma City, OK) Over 1 in 10 pregnancies – representing up to 400,000 pregnancies each year - is at high risk for the delivery of premature babies – babies born before 37 weeks. Prematurity is a frightening condition for expectant parents and can result in prolonged hospitalization after birth and complications including mental retardation, blindness, deafness and chronic respiratory disease. Fear of premature delivery often paralyzes the pregnant woman and causes a sense of loss of control over her body and her pregnancy. A new test is available that can reduce those fears – and all pregnant women should know whether this test is appropriate for them.

Fetal fibronectin (fFN) is a protein made during pregnancy that “glues” the developing baby’s amniotic sac to the uterus. To do an fFN test, a swab is placed inside the vagina and sent to the lab. Results of the test are available 6 hours to two days after the sample is obtained depending upon the facility performing it. The test is available at most hospitals and some doctor’s offices and costs about \$200. After 22 weeks and before 34 weeks gestation, the presence of fFN in the vagina suggests that the glue is breaking down too early, placing the woman at risk of preterm delivery. A negative test predicts a less than 1% chance that the woman will deliver within 2 weeks. The greatest value of fFN is in women with symptoms of preterm labor (such as abdominal pain, back pain or pelvic pressure) in which the test is negative.

For Shannon Mills of Oklahoma City, the test was a godsend. Mills miscarried her first pregnancy and her second was high risk due to gestational diabetes. When she began having abdominal pain late in the second trimester of her pregnancy, she was desperate for reassurance that this baby would not deliver prematurely. Her Obstetrician,

Dr. Rachel Franklin, sent her to the hospital for the fFN test. As she holds little Morgan today, she expresses how much having a negative test meant to her sense of well being about her pregnancy. (QUOTE)

Dr. Franklin suggests that women at high risk of preterm labor who are having symptoms suspicious for the condition call and ask their physicians for the fFN test. She says it is not recommended for screening of all pregnant women or for women at high risk in whom no symptoms of preterm labor are evident. She adds that the fFN test is unable to stop preterm labor or delivery but can allow time for interventions that can reduce the risks of complications due to preterm delivery. She urges all pregnant women regardless of their fFN status to follow the advice of their doctors in reducing their risks of pregnancy-related complications.

Little Morgan Mills entered the world weighing over 8 pounds, and her mommy and daddy were glad for the relief that their normal fFN test had brought them during the more uncertain period of their pregnancy. New mom Shannon says she may even give pregnancy another try – in a few more years.

Dr. Rachel Franklin is a Board Certified Family Medicine physician and author of the new book **EXPECTING TWINS, TRIPLETS AND MORE: A DOCTOR'S GUIDE TO A HEALTHY AND HAPPY MULTIPLE PREGNANCY** (St. Martin's Press, April 2005). In addition to maintaining a practice focusing on women's and children's health, Dr. Franklin provides expert advice to the members of the TWINS Magazine website. Her advice has been featured in print media including TWINS Magazine, Parents Magazine and The Boston Herald. She has been interviewed in local and syndicated news broadcasts on topics ranging from diabetes and Alzheimer's Disease to multiple pregnancy and other women's health topics. For more information, please see her media kit at [www.AskDrRachel.com](http://www.AskDrRachel.com) or contact the persons above.

###

**EXPECTING TWINS, TRIPLETS AND MORE: A DOCTOR'S GUIDE TO A  
HEALTHY AND HAPPY MULTIPLE PREGNANCY**

St. Martin's Press, April 2005

Paperback, 280 pages

ISBN: 978-0-312-32823-0