

QUESTIONS COMMONLY ASKED AT TIME OF DIAGNOSIS

What causes the heart to form this way?

As yet the causes of single ventricle heart conditions are unknown. It cannot be linked with mild drinking, smoking or the taking of 'over the counter' or most prescribed medications.

It is very likely that one or more abnormalities are present before the third month of pregnancy but they may become more obvious as the heart is growing through the last part of the pregnancy.

Heart abnormalities can be present in babies that have other congenital problems, for example genetic disorders like Down's syndrome or Di George syndrome.

Why was the problem not detected during pregnancy?

It is possible to detect single ventricle heart disease during pregnancy but it may not be obvious during scans due to the size or position of the baby. In some cases the condition can develop later in pregnancy after the routine scans have been performed.

For more information see section on Antenatal Diagnosis.

Can my baby have treatment anywhere in the country?

Over the past few years, an increasing number of centres around the country have begun offering surgery for these conditions, but not all, so it may be necessary for your baby to move hospital to receive treatment.