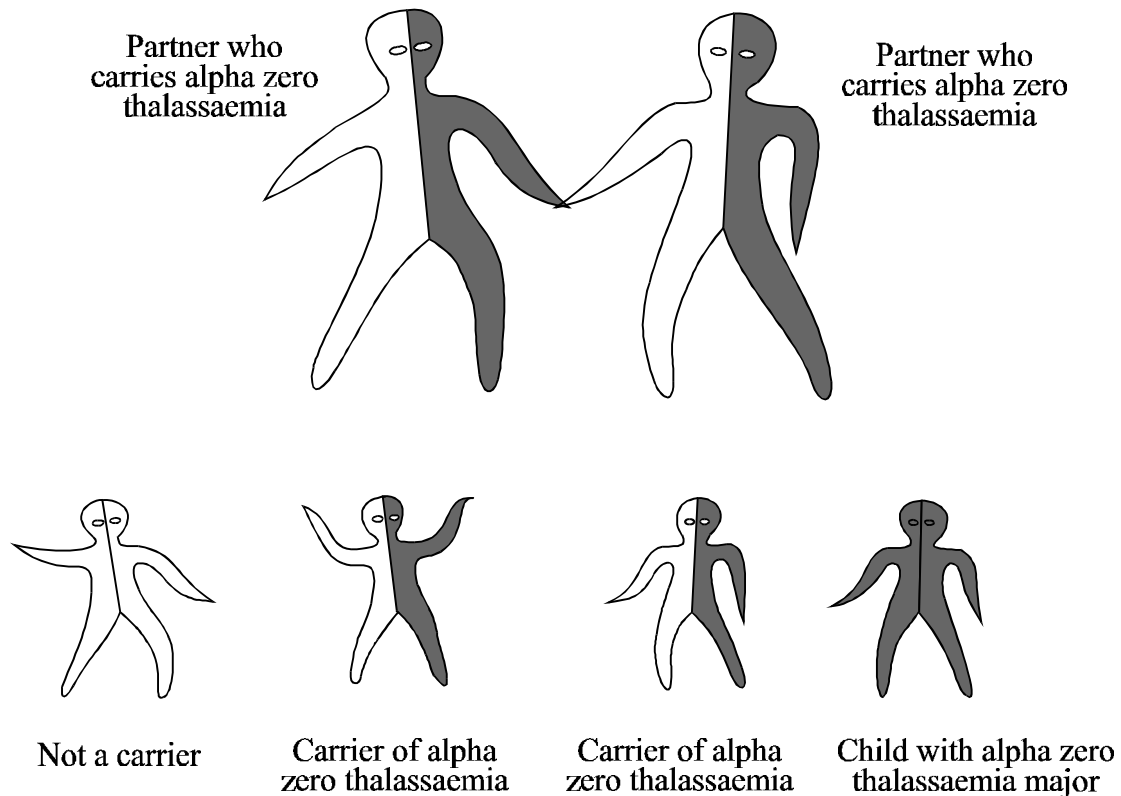


Implications for a Child when Both Partners carry Alpha Zero Thalassaemia

This couple could have a child with alpha zero thalassaemia major.

(This is also called alpha thalassaemia hydrops fetalis, or Haemoglobin Bart's hydrops fetalis.)



In each pregnancy, there are three possibilities:

- The child may not carry any haemoglobin disorder.
- The child may carry alpha zero thalassaemia. This is harmless.
- The baby may inherit alpha zero thalassaemia from both parents. This baby would have **alpha zero thalassaemia major**.

In each pregnancy there is a 3 out of 4 chance of a healthy baby, and a 1 in 4 risk of a baby with alpha zero thalassaemia major.

Alpha zero thalassaemia major is a severe anaemia that affects the baby in the womb, before birth. When a baby has alpha zero thalassaemia major the pregnancy seems to go normally up to about 5 months, sometimes for longer. But then the baby stops growing properly, and the mother may develop high blood pressure. An *ultrasound scan* usually shows that the baby is puffed up with water. Often the baby is born prematurely. It is usually dead or dying when it is born.

It is possible to test a baby for alpha zero thalassaemia major early in pregnancy. This couple should see an expert counsellor in haemoglobin disorders to discuss their options, before starting a pregnancy, or as early in pregnancy as possible.

Counselling for haemoglobin disorders is provided in your area by: