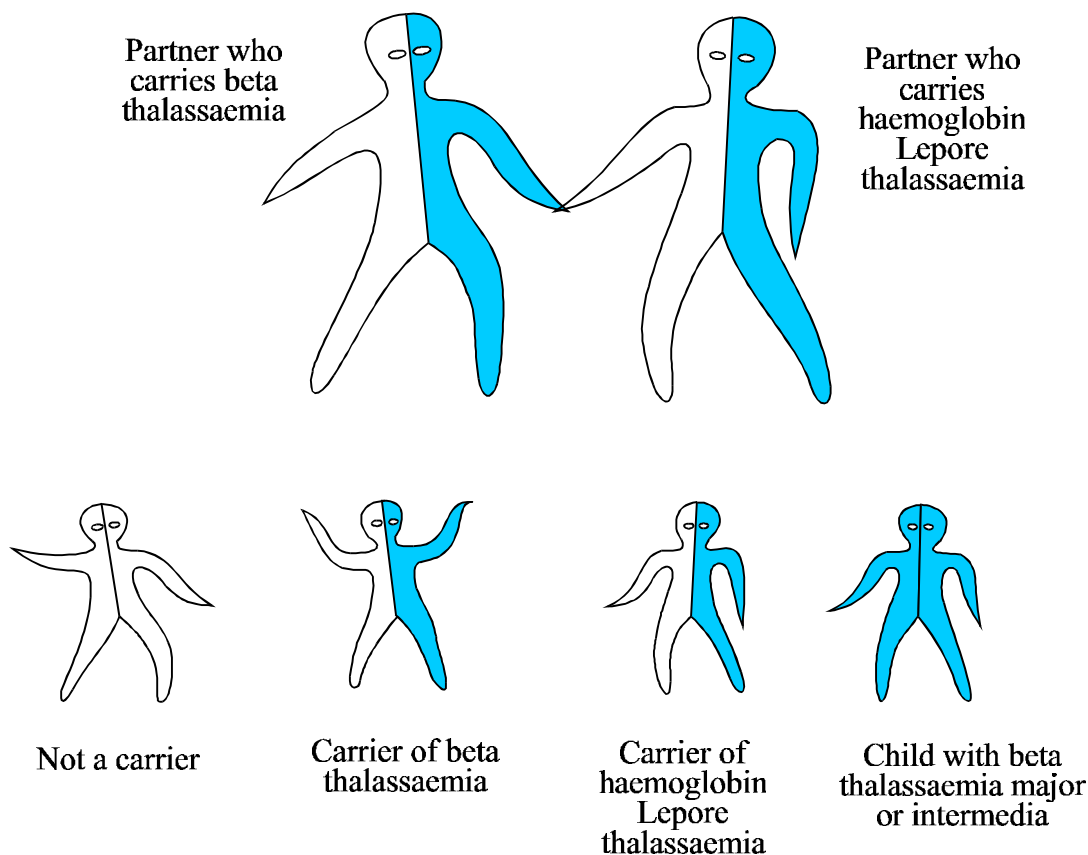


Implications for a Child when One Partner carries Beta Thalassaemia and the Other carries Haemoglobin Lepore thalassaemia

*This couple could have a child with **beta thalassaemia major***



In each pregnancy, there are four possibilities.

- The child may not carry any haemoglobin disorder.
- The child may carry beta thalassaemia. This is harmless.
- The child may carry haemoglobin Lepore thalassaemia. This is harmless.
- The child may inherit beta thalassaemia from one parent and haemoglobin Lepore from the other. This child would have a severe inherited anaemia called **beta thalassaemia major** or **beta thalassaemia intermedia**.

In each pregnancy there is a 3 out of 4 chance of a healthy child, and a 1 out of 4 risk of child with beta thalassaemia major.

Beta thalassaemia major is a severe anaemia that starts between 6 months and 1 year of age. Most affected people need a blood transfusion every month, for life, and other treatments. Some people who inherit beta thalassaemia from one parent and haemoglobin Lepore thalassaemia from the other have a milder anaemia called **beta thalassaemia intermedia**, and may manage without blood transfusions.

We cannot reliably predict which couples could have children with severe or milder thalassaemia.

It is possible to test a baby for beta thalassaemia major or intermedia 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: