

## How may I be affected?

**The trait is not the disorder.** If you carry the trait then this does not seriously affect your health and you will not 'develop' the disorder. You may have mild anaemia and you should always tell your doctors you carry the trait, especially if pregnant, to ensure you get the right care.

## Why get a test?

**If you are a genetic carrier of the trait - called thalassaemia minor or sickle-cell trait - you may not know you have it.**

The genetic trait can be passed on by one parent. However, problems may arise for your children if you and your partner carry the trait. In this situation, you could have children with the major disorders.

A child may develop the disorder if they inherit the gene from both parents. If both parents carry the trait, then there is a 25% risk of the child developing the disorder.

**A simple blood test with your doctor will make you aware if you have the trait.** If you and your partner know then you can get medical support with planning for your family to reduce the risks for your children.



# KnowMy Trait

Don't wait!

You may be a genetic carrier and not know it!  
Take a test with your local doctor

## #KnowMyTrait

Show your support with the tag  
[#KnowMyTrait](#) on Facebook

Follow the campaign online at  
[knowmytrait.org](http://knowmytrait.org)

Email us today on  
[coordinator@thalnsw.org.au](mailto:coordinator@thalnsw.org.au)



Thalassaemia  
Society of NSW

[www.thalnsw.org.au](http://www.thalnsw.org.au)

# KnowMy Trait



Thalassaemia and sickle cell  
anaemia awareness campaign



Thalassaemia  
Society of NSW

# Thalassaemia & Sickle Cell Anaemia

## What is it?

Thalassaemia major and Sickle Cell anaemia are the most common inherited blood disorders in the world. These conditions affect the production of haemoglobin, a protein in red blood cells which carries oxygen around the body, resulting in severe anaemia, fatigue, growth delay and increased risks of infections. They require life-long blood transfusions and daily drug therapy. **The genetic trait for these conditions is inherited. It is passed through families.**

The inherited conditions range from the Minor or Trait condition (the carrier) up to the Major or severe condition (the blood disorder).

## Who may get it?

Anyone, but the genetic traits and the disorders are most common in people with ancestral history from the following regions:

**Mediterranean, Middle-East, South-East Asia and Southern China, India and South Asian countries, North and Sub-Saharan African countries, Central and South America.**

Between 5% -15% of the population from countries within these regions may carry the trait.

In Australia, due to migration we recommend everyone consider a simple blood test to **know my trait**. The trait can be present even if your parents or grand-parents were born in Australia.

A family history of anaemia may be another indicator for you to get a test.

## How to get tested?



### 01 Be Aware

Talk to your doctor or head to [thalnsw.org.au](http://thalnsw.org.au) for info



### 02 Take a Test

Get your doctor to take a simple blood test for haemoglobin disorders. Ask for:

Hb EPG - Haemoglobin electrophoresis  
Full blood count  
Ferritin/Iron studies

### 03 Be Informed

*If you carry the trait:*

Talk to your doctor about seeing a haematologist.  
Encourage your family and partner to take a test

*If you do not carry:*

Stay healthy  
Grow awareness by telling family and friends



### 04 Take Control

Monitor your health with future doctors  
Discuss the test with family and current or future partners

## Take a quick test

+ Ancestry from a listed region? Y / N / ?

+ A Family history of anaemia? Y / N / ?

If **Yes** or **?** to either then:

Be Aware, Be Informed:  
Visit: [knowmytrait.org](http://knowmytrait.org)

Make an appointment to see your doctor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## The doctor meeting

Discuss Family ancestry

Discuss history of anaemia

Ask to for a blood test for haemoglobin disorders:

Hb EPG: Haemoglobin electrophoresis  
Full blood count  
Ferritin/Iron studies

## Final action

Discuss with family and partner and encourage them to make a doctor appointment