**What if both parents have beta thalassemia trait?**

- If both parents have beta thalassemia trait, there is a 25 percent (1 in 4) chance **with each pregnancy** of having a child with beta thalassemia **disease**.
- The amount of hemoglobin produced determines whether a person has:
  - Beta thalassemia intermedia or
  - Beta thalassemia major disease.
- Beta thalassemia major is also called Cooley’s anemia.
- Beta thalassemia disease is a lifelong illness that can cause serious health problems. People with this disease need medical treatment.

**What is beta thalassemia trait?**

- Beta thalassemia is a condition that affects the red blood cells.
- Your red blood cells contain hemoglobin, which carries oxygen from the lungs to all parts of your body. People with normal hemoglobin have only one (1) type, hemoglobin A.
- People with beta thalassemia trait have both normal hemoglobin A and abnormal beta thalassemia (β) hemoglobin in their red blood cells.
- People with beta thalassemia do not make enough hemoglobin.
- People with beta thalassemia trait do not develop beta thalassemia disease or sickle cell disease later in life.

**Who can have beta thalassemia trait?**

- Beta thalassemia trait is common in people whose ancestors came from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, or the Mediterranean region. It is possible for a person of any nationality to have beta thalassemia trait.
Why should I know if I have beta thalassemia trait?

- You can pass on beta thalassemia trait to your children, like you would hair or eye color.
- If one (1) parent has beta thalassemia trait and the other parent has normal hemoglobin A, there is a 50 percent (1 in 2) chance with each pregnancy of having a child with beta thalassemia trait.
- Normally, beta thalassemia trait does not cause any health problems.
- Beta thalassemia trait is also known as beta thalassemia minor.

What if one (1) parent has beta thalassemia trait and the other parent has sickle cell trait?

- If one (1) parent has beta thalassemia trait and the other parent has sickle cell trait, there is a 25 percent (1 in 4) chance with each pregnancy of having a child with sickle cell disease.
- Depending on the amount of hemoglobin produced, this type of sickle cell disease is called:
  - Sickle beta plus thalassemia or
  - Sickle beta zero thalassemia disease.
- A person with sickle cell disease has red blood cells that can sickle or become banana shaped. Under certain conditions, these cells can keep blood from circulating freely.
- Sickle cell disease is a lifelong illness that can cause serious health problems. People with this disease need medical treatment.