Congenital toxoplasmosis is caused by transplacental fetal contamination following maternal primary infection. Risk of transmission increases with gestational age. Severity is higher when transmission occurs before 20 WG leading to abortion, fetal loss, prematurity or severe fetal damage (particularity neurological). After this period, infection mainly affects the eye.

Since establishment of prenatal screening in Austria and France, toxoplasmosis has declined. Early maternal treatment (spiramycin or pyrimethamine-sulfonamide) has shown a lower incidence of fetal sequelae. Combination of ultrasound follow-up, fetal MRI, real time PCR on amniotic fluid allows antenatal diagnosis of severe forms of CT in which termination of pregnancy are accepted. Only 15% of infected liveborn children have clinical signs.

In countries with high incidence of CT and without national program, prenatal and/or neonatal screening are required to improve medical care and minimize sequelae (chorioretinitis, hydrocephalus ...). Low prevalence countries recommend neonatal screening or prevention rules.

In case of prenatal diagnosis, clinical examination, serological tests (detection of specific IgM/IgA confirmed at day 10, comparison of immunologic mother-child profiles), transfontanelle ultrasonography and ocular fundus are performed at birth. In lack of prenatal screening, when children are symptomatic, maternal serology (with avidity test), PCR on placenta, neonatal lumbar punctation and tomography are added. In asymptomatic children, diagnosis will be evoked when complications appear (visual impairment, psychomotor delay, seizures...).

Serological tests should be interpreted cautiously in early or late maternal infection, maternal treatment without amnioncensis. Thus infected children have to be treated early to reduce risk of chorioretinitis.

Management from Day 10 to Day 365 has two goals according to the results of the work-up performed at birth, and eventually in utero. The first is to start treatment and surveillance in infected newborns and, the second, applying to settings where prenatal screening is performed, is to confirm the absence of infection in newborns and, the second, applying to settings where prenatal screening is performed, is to confirm the absence of infection in newborns who are born from a mother who seroconverted during pregnancy but who show no signs of infection at birth.

When congenital infection is proven the standard attitude in France is to start treatment without delay even newborns with no clinical signs. Treatment relies on a combination of pyrimethamine and sulfonamides but there is no consensus on the type of treatment, on the length of treatment, ranging from 3 to 24 months. Children under treatment should be monitored regularly for side effects. The decrease of IgG under treatment is a normal evolution and should not be interpreted as a sign of non-infection. Regular neurological and ophthalmological examinations in the first year of life are also important to detect any signs that would deserve special attention.

In the second case, the absence of clinical and biological signs in utero or at birth significantly decreases the probability of infection. Repeated serological tests remain however necessary to fully exclude infection by monitoring the decrease of IgG to undetectable levels. Any neosynthesis of IgG would indicate that the child is infected and warrant starting the same treatment as in infected infants.