

Low Dose Aspirin in Pregnancy to prevent Pre-Eclampsia Information Leaflet

You have been asked to take 150mg of Aspirin during your pregnancy to reduce the risk of Pre-Eclampsia.

This leaflet explains why we have asked you to take Aspirin during your pregnancy.

What is Pre-Eclampsia?

Pre-Eclampsia is a condition found only in pregnancy that causes:

- Raised blood pressure (Hypertension)
- Protein in the urine (Proteinuria)

It affects around 2 to 10 of every 100 pregnant women. Most women will have a mild form, with some having more severe cases.

Women will often have no symptoms and it is diagnosed at routine antenatal appointments with your midwife. Some women will experience headaches, blurred vision and swelling of the hands, feet and face.

These symptoms can be managed with medications that bring your blood pressure down, however the only cure for pre-eclampsia is when your baby is delivered.

What is the risk of Pre-Eclampsia?

If pre-eclampsia is not treated then there is a risk that it may affect the growth of the baby inside the womb, as well as a risk to the health of the mother. In these cases, the baby may need to be delivered (induced) earlier.

Who gets Pre-Eclampsia?

Any woman can develop pre-eclampsia during pregnancy. However, some women are at increased risk for a variety of reasons. The risk factors are divided into Moderate Risk Factors and High Risk Factors.

Moderate Risk Factors:

- First pregnancy
- BMI >35
- Age >40 years
- Multiple pregnancy (twins/triplets etc)
- Family history of pre-eclampsia (Sister/Mother)
- >10 years since previous pregnancy
- If you have a British and Minority Ethnic Origin (BAME)

High Risk Factors:

- Previous pre-eclampsia before 37 weeks
- Pre-existing chronic or essential hypertension
- Chronic kidney disease
- Systemic Lupus Erythematosus or Antiphospholipid antibody syndrome (Autoimmune disease)
- Diabetes
- Previous fetal growth restriction (birthweight less than the 3rd centile) at any gestation

Why have I been asked to take Aspirin?

You have been asked to take Aspirin because your doctor feels that you are at risk of developing pre-eclampsia based on the previously mentioned risk factors. Research suggests that taking Aspirin during pregnancy reduces your risk of developing pre-eclampsia before 37 weeks by two thirds.

Is Aspirin safe to take during pregnancy?

Yes it is!

Research has shown that Aspirin does not cause harm to the development of the baby during pregnancy. There is also no increased risk of bleeding when taking Aspirin during pregnancy, either to you or the baby.

Although it is advised for you to take Aspirin, it is an unlicensed use of the medication.

What happens next?

We recommend you take 150mg of Aspirin every night from the 12th week of pregnancy until delivery of your baby. We will ask your GP to provide a prescription for Aspirin and we will continue to monitor your blood pressure and urine protein throughout your pregnancy.

Further information

If you have any further questions about taking Aspirin during pregnancy, or about pre-eclampsia, then please speak to your community midwife, GP or contact the Antenatal Clinic at Liverpool Women's Hospital.

This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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