

# Pre-eclampsia and Aspirin in pregnancy



## What is pre-eclampsia?

Pre-eclampsia is a complication that occurs in 5-8% of pregnancies. It involves a rise in blood pressure which is accompanied by a leakage of protein from the kidneys into your urine. This protein can be detected by testing your urine at each antenatal visit. In severe cases, headaches, visual disturbances, stomach pain, facial swelling and nausea may occur.

## Why am I being offered aspirin?

During pregnancy and the post-natal period, some women have an increased chance of developing pre-eclampsia. Midwives assess all women at the point of booking regarding their chances of developing pre-eclampsia. Women who may be more likely to develop this condition will be advised to take 150mgs of Aspirin each night, by mouth, from week 12 of their pregnancy until week 36, as there is evidence this can help lower your chances of developing the condition.

Aspirin belongs to a group of drugs called antiplatelet drugs. These drugs stop the platelets in your blood sticking together so you are less likely to get blood clots that can block off your blood vessels and cause a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or stroke. If you are otherwise healthy there are no known serious risks or side effects to you, or any risks to your unborn baby. Aspirin can cause indigestion if taken on an empty stomach so should be taken with food. You can buy 150mg of aspirin over the counter by taking this leaflet signed by your midwife or GP.

## Why am I at risk?

Pre-eclampsia can occur in any pregnancy but you are at higher risk if your blood pressure has already been high before you became pregnant, or if your blood pressure was high in a previous pregnancy.

If you have a medical disorder such as diabetes or a kidney condition, or if you have a condition that affects the immune system such as lupus, you are at a higher risk of developing pre-eclampsia.

The importance of other risk factors is less known, but generally you are more likely to develop pre-eclampsia if two of the following apply to you:

- You are aged 40 years old or over
- This is your first pregnancy
- It is more than 10 years since your last pregnancy
- Your BMI is 35 or more
- You have a family history of pre-eclampsia
- You are expecting twins or multiple births.

## Who do I get in touch with for more information?

For more information, speak with your midwife or GP or phone **01273 664794**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read this leaflet  
and understand why I have been advised to take Aspirin in pregnancy.

I have been advised by my midwife to take 150mg of Aspirin daily by  
mouth from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ in accordance with NICE Guidance.

Midwife/Doctor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Midwife/Doctor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Midwife PIN/Doctor stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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

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The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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