



PATIENT INFORMATION

ASPIRIN IN PREGNANCY AND PRE-ECLAMPSIA

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 have I been given Aspirin?

During pregnancy and the post-natal period, some women have an increased chance of developing pre-eclampsia. Midwives assess 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 75mgs of Aspirin daily by mouth, from week 12 of their pregnancy until the birth of their baby, 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 will be given 75mg Aspirin tablets when you attend the hospital for your dating scan.

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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.