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# Information for Women Taking Aspirin in Pregnancy

## Maternity Department

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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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You have been given this leaflet because you have been advised to take aspirin during your pregnancy.

When the placenta, which feeds your baby and helps your baby, does not work properly it can lead to your baby being smaller and needing early delivery. It could also lead to you developing pre-eclampsia. Very rarely, the placenta can cause the baby to be stillborn or die within the first few months of life. Taking aspirin has been shown to help reduce the risk of these problems.

### **Why am I at higher risk?**

At your first few antenatal appointments with the midwife or doctor, they will have asked you questions to help identify if you are at higher risk of problems with the placenta. These include:

- This being your first pregnancy
- You being 40 or over
- Your last pregnancy being more than 10 years ago
- Your BMI (body mass index) being over 35
- You are expecting more than one baby this pregnancy
- Blood pressure before you became pregnant
- Raised blood pressure or pre-eclampsia in a previous pregnancy
- A previous small baby, either <2.5kg or <10th centile
- Chronic kidney disease or diabetes.
- Low Pregnancy Associated Plasma Protein A – Papp-A <0.41MoM

## Signs and symptoms of pre-eclampsia

Pre-eclampsia can cause lots of different symptoms including:

- Headaches
- Vision (eye) problems
- Tummy pain
- Swollen feet, hands and face

Often, there are no symptoms and women feel completely well. This is the reason the midwife or doctor will check your blood pressure and urine each time you seen them. It affects as many as 1 in 10 pregnancies but is often mild. In severe cases it can affect 1 in 100 pregnancies.

## How will my baby's growth be checked?

Additional scans will be arranged after your 20 week anomaly scan.

Exactly when and how many scans you have depends on your risks and blood flow tests performed at the scan. Your baby does not need to be delivered early just because you are taking aspirin.

## How do I take aspirin?

You will need to see your GP to ask them for a prescription for the aspirin. Please take this leaflet with you to the GP.

It has been shown to be most effective to take 150mg aspirin (2 'baby' aspirin) every night from 12 to 36 weeks of pregnancy. Taking it at night has been shown to help the medicine be absorbed.

If you miss the occasional dose, do not worry. Take the dose when you remember but do not take an 'extra' dose.

## What are the side effects of aspirin?

Aspirin is very safe for most women to take.

If you have previously had stomach ulcers, bleeding disorders or asthma, or are allergic to Aspirin, please consult your Obstetrician before taking Aspirin.

It has not been shown to increase the risk of having a miscarriage or bleeding during pregnancy or at the time of delivery. It has not been shown to cause any abnormalities in babies.

## Can I still take aspirin if I am taking other medication?

Aspirin can occasionally interact with other medications so it is important that you tell the midwife or doctor if you are taking any other medications or herbal remedies, including those bought over the counter without a prescription.

For more information, speak with your midwife or GP or phone **01932 722389 or 722388**