

PREGNANCY CHECKLIST

FACT SHEET



PREGNANCY CHECKLIST

When	Planning	Check
12 months prior to conception	<p>Speak with your GP or neurologist to discuss relevant issues for before, during & after pregnancy (fertility, potential impact on baby, seizures, support etc)</p> <p>Think about what antenatal clinic you will attend or source an obstetrician</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-12 months prior to conception	<p>Discussion with the neurologist or GP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ your type of epilepsy, risk of seizures ○ how pregnancy may affect seizures ○ understand risks to mother & child ○ how to avoid triggers, how to reduce risks ○ what to do if seizure happens ○ anti-seizure medications ○ genetic counselling, genetic testing ○ breastfeeding ○ emergency medication (if necessary) ○ vitamin supplementation 	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-12 months prior to conception	<p>Aim for best seizure control before pregnancy</p> <p>Medication review with neurologist or GP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ suitable medications for pregnancy ○ pre-pregnancy medications levels checked if necessary ○ possible dose adjustments ○ take medications as prescribed ○ see Medications, Epilepsy & Pregnancy <p>Make necessary lifestyle changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ adequate sleep, manage stress ○ good diet & health (stop alcohol, illicit drugs, smoking, reduce caffeine, exercise) ○ support from family & friends 	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 months prior to conception & first trimester	<p>Taking recommended pregnancy vitamins, supplements, & folic acid (speak to your neurologist about other vitamins that may help)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>See EAA Pregnancy Factsheet</p> <p>Read about Seizures in the Womb</p> <p>Contact us for further information & support 1300 37 45 37 epilepsy@epilepsy.org.au</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Useful information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Know common household substances & ○ Foods you should avoid during pregnancy 	<input type="checkbox"/>

When	Planning	Check
Pregnancy		
First trimester	See your GP as soon as you know you are pregnant. If your pregnancy is not planned, don't panic, continue to take your medication & make an appointment with your doctor as soon as you can.	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester	Contact Australian Pregnancy Register 1800 069 722 Lots of information available to help in planning & having a chat can help relieve anxiety & stress. APR provide ongoing support & resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester	Make an appointment with an obstetrician (if you have one) or antenatal clinic, & where possible, attend neurology appointments.	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester	Book the hospital, birth centre & antenatal classes. Check Maternity Leave	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester	Your GP or neurologist might wish to check your anti-seizure medication levels progressively through your pregnancy & afterwards, depending on which medication you are taking (some levels may drop so the doses may need to be increased).	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester	Your GP, obstetrician, neurologist or midwife may suggest some screening tests to be undertaken.	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester	Sign up for a week-by-week online pregnancy guide or app You receive weekly notifications about baby & what to expect with your pregnancy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Throughout	Keep track of seizures if they are occurring Develop an epilepsy management plan if necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Throughout	Avoid your known seizure triggers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manage morning sickness ○ Healthy diet, no alcohol ○ Allow for a rest time each day, adequate sleep ○ Manage stress 	<input type="checkbox"/>
As advised by Doctor	Take your vitamins, folic acid as recommended by your doctor.	<input type="checkbox"/>
First trimester (onwards to third trimester)	Think about a birth plan (discuss with doctor) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Type of birth you would like ○ If you have a Vagus Nerve Stimulation device, does it need to be switched off in case of emergency surgery? ○ Analgesia considerations ○ Planned actions if a seizure happens 	<input type="checkbox"/>

When	Planning	Check
First trimester (onwards to third trimester)	<p>Think about an advanced birth plan to cover medications & support after delivery & the next few days (talk to Neurologist & Obstetrician)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you need an extra day or two in hospital? ○ If seizures are not controlled, do you need a room-in person to help with baby to try to avoid sleep deprivation ○ If your anti-seizure medication doses have been increased during pregnancy, discuss having a written plan by your Neurologist as to how & when they may be reduced & whether another medication blood level is recommended 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Many women with epilepsy experience anxiety & depression even before thinking about a pregnancy. This can lead to an increase in these feelings during the pregnancy & may lead to post-natal depression.</p> <p>If you are feeling like you need help with this, seek support. See our Factsheet - Depression, Anxiety and Epilepsy for more information</p> <p>Read about Perinatal Depression and go to PANDA for support</p>	
	<p>Plan ahead for looking after baby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New baby checklist ○ Essential equipment ○ Safety & day to day considerations ○ Support ○ Transport 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Going Home		
Before going home	Medications to be reviewed by doctor (may need adjustments if changed during pregnancy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newborn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support for care of the baby especially if you are experiencing seizures ○ Safety considerations <p>For tips see our Parenting Factsheet</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newborn – Toddler	<p>Sleep & rest for you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support from partner, family or friends ○ Organise a schedule as much as you can ○ Breastfeeding is encouraged & linked with positive health benefits for baby & mother. The use of anti-seizure medications while breastfeeding usually does not pose significant additional risks. Australian Breastfeeding Association may be able to help. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growing up	Parents with epilepsy, might experience some challenging moments or concerns during parenthood. There are ways you can reduce the risk of seizures. For more information: Parenting when you have Epilepsy	<input type="checkbox"/>

Disclaimer: This information is given to provide accurate, general information about epilepsy. Medical information and knowledge changes rapidly and you should consult your doctor for more detailed information. This is not medical advice, and you should not make any medication or treatment changes without consulting your doctor.