

Low dose aspirin in pregnancy

We recommend that some women take a low dose of aspirin daily during their pregnancy.

Taking low dose aspirin may reduce the risk of having a medical problem called pre-eclampsia, or a baby who is not growing well (known as fetal growth restriction).

Pre-eclampsia is a problem where women develop high blood pressure later in pregnancy and it can make you and your baby unwell.

Fetal growth restriction is when a baby does not grow to its full potential, usually in the last few months of the pregnancy. It is often caused by a placenta that is not nourishing the baby as well as it should.

Women who have a higher risk of developing pre-eclampsia or fetal growth restriction may be advised to take low dose aspirin from early in the pregnancy until about the last month.

This may be women who had high blood pressure with a previous baby, who have high blood pressure or kidney problems when not pregnant, or who are screened as having a higher risk of pre-eclampsia or fetal growth restriction on early pregnancy testing.

Low dose aspirin thins the blood a little and reduces inflammation which may help the placenta (afterbirth) to develop better.

A placenta that doesn't develop properly is thought to be one of the reasons why some women develop pre-eclampsia or fetal growth restriction.

Low dose aspirin is safe to take and has been well researched. It is easily available at chemists and supermarkets.

The recommended dose is 150mg taken every night. This is half a standard 300mg aspirin tablet which can be swallowed or dissolved into water.

Break the 300mg tablet in half, take half the tablet and then throw away the unused half. Use a fresh tablet the next night.

If you are feeling nauseated, you should take the aspirin with food.

Please do not worry if the packet of aspirin says not to take in pregnancy.

Taking low dose aspirin causes almost no side effects and is well tolerated.

Please remember to take it every night.

