

Breastmilk has many benefits however it is an individual decision to breastfeed. Do not feel guilty if you decide against breastfeeding, as looking after your mental health means you are doing the best thing for your baby.

Further information

Best use of medicines in pregnancy (BUMPS):

<https://www.medicinesinpregnancy.org>

Drugs and Lactation Database - Lactmed:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK501922/>

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656 or 826319

Antipsychotic medication in pregnancy

Information for pregnant women





What should I do if I become pregnant whilst taking antipsychotic medication?

Talk to your GP or Psychiatrist as soon as possible. **Do not stop your medication without consulting your Doctor, as you may become unwell again, especially if the medication is stopped suddenly.** Your GP or Midwife may refer you to a psychiatrist who specialises in mental health in pregnancy to discuss the medication you are taking.

Antipsychotic medication during pregnancy

If you have had a severe mental health problem in the past and are taking antipsychotics, decisions about your medication need to be made carefully. Pregnancy does not protect against mental illness. In some mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder and schizoaffective disorder, there is a higher chance of becoming unwell in pregnancy therefore you will be offered a referral to the perinatal mental health team to support you in your pregnancy.

Does antipsychotic medication increase the risk of miscarriage or birth defects?

There is no evidence that antipsychotics increase the risk of miscarriage. There is also no evidence that antipsychotics increase the risk of birth defects apart from one study which has shown that a drug called Risperidone may slightly increase the risk, but we need more research to be sure of this.

Do antipsychotics cause problems in pregnancy?

Antipsychotics may increase the risk of developing pregnancy diabetes. We can advise on healthy eating in pregnancy and will offer you a test for diabetes called a GTT during your pregnancy. You will also be offered an appointment in the obstetric antenatal clinic.

After birth

If you decide not to take antipsychotic medication during pregnancy, think about restarting them after giving birth. This can lower your risk of mental health problems after the birth, such as postnatal depression and psychosis.

Depending on the medication and dose you are taking, you may be advised to stay in hospital after the birth for close monitoring of your baby.

Can I breastfeed whilst taking medication?

This is a choice which depends on several factors. Antipsychotic medication does pass into breast milk in small amounts, but this does not mean that you cannot breastfeed as these amounts are not thought to harm your baby. Clozapine is the only antipsychotic that we recommend that you should **not** breastfeed whilst taking, as it can cause health problems for your baby. We recommend that you speak to your Midwife or Doctor about this.