



Low dose aspirin (150mg) in pregnancy

You have been given this factsheet because you have been advised to take a low dose of aspirin (150mg) once a day from 12 to 36 weeks of pregnancy

This information sheet is about the use of low dose aspirin (150mg) only.

What is low dose aspirin?

Aspirin is a blood-thinning medication. It is known as a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID). Aspirin is often used to treat pain, fever or inflammation.

You have been advised to take **a low dose of 150mg once a day**.

Taking a low dose of aspirin may help to reduce the risk of:

- developing hypertension (high blood pressure) and pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure and effects on other organs including the placenta)
- giving birth to your baby prematurely (before 37 weeks)
- your baby being smaller than expected

Your midwife, general practitioner (GP), or obstetrician (a doctor who specialises in the care of pregnant women) may recommend that you take low dose aspirin if:

- you had hypertension (high blood pressure) during a previous pregnancy
- you have chronic kidney disease
- you have an auto-immune disease e.g. lupus or antiphospholipid syndrome
- you have type 1 or 2 diabetes
- you have chronic hypertension
- you have previously given birth to a baby who was much smaller than expected

Low dose aspirin may also be recommended if two or more of the following apply to you:

- this is your first pregnancy.
- you are aged 40 years or older.
- it is more than 10 years between this pregnancy and the birth of your last baby.
- your body mass index (BMI) is 35 or more at your booking appointment.
- there is a family history of pre-eclampsia.
- this is a multiple pregnancy e.g. twins or triplets

Your doctor may also advise you take low dose aspirin for other reasons, which they will discuss with you.

Is low dose aspirin safe to take in pregnancy?

- Low dose aspirin is not known to be harmful to you or your baby during pregnancy. However, aspirin can affect (and be affected by) other medication, including 'over the counter' medicines and herbal remedies. Please discuss any other medications you are taking with your midwife or doctor.
- You should only take low dose aspirin if your midwife or doctor has advised you to. It is available 'over the counter'.
- Taking low dose aspirin does not change any of your choices for pain relief in labour. You can stop taking your low dose aspirin once your baby is born.

Side effects

- Mild indigestion. This is a common side effect and is known to affect more than 1 in 100 people. If you take your aspirin either with or just after food, it will be less likely to upset your stomach. Avoid taking aspirin on an empty stomach. If you also take indigestion remedies, take them at least two hours before or after you take your aspirin.
- Bleeding tendency: There is NO evidence to suggest low dose aspirin causes any increase in bleeding during pregnancy or at the time of birth.

If you have any questions or concerns about taking low dose aspirin, please speak to your doctor or midwife. Please read the information leaflet included with your aspirin for more information about the rarer complications.

Allergies/Caution

Please tell your doctor if:

- you are allergic to aspirin (or other NSAIDs)
- you have severe asthma, chronic kidney problems, stomach ulcers
- you have been previously advised not to take aspirin or other NSAIDs

Caution should be taken if you have low platelets or a history of bleeding disorders.

As with any medicine, you should seek urgent medical assistance if you experience serious side effects such as wheezing, swelling of the lips, face or body, rashes or other indications of an allergic reaction.

Further information

If you would like more information about taking low dose aspirin in pregnancy, your midwife or doctor will be happy to answer your questions and advise you.

Useful links

Best Use of Medicines in Pregnancy website:

www.medicinesinpregnancy.org/Medicine--pregnancy/Aspirin/