



Planning With Your Health Care Team



planning a pregnancy

Talk with your adult congenital heart disease (ACHD) cardiologist and obstetrician before you become pregnant. A couple of key points to talk about are:

- Review your medicines with your cardiologist. Do not start or stop taking any medicines without his or her OK.
- Create a birth plan and plans for care after delivery (including birth control).

Talk With Members of Your Health Care Team

You will need to partner closely with your health care team before becoming pregnant to make sure your health needs are met. If you are thinking about getting pregnant, ask your cardiologist if pregnancy is safe for you.

Pregnancy may be higher risk for you and your baby. Or, you may need to change the medicines you take before becoming pregnant. There may be an increased risk of your baby having a congenital heart defect.

Members of Your Health Care Team

■ Obstetrician

This doctor is an expert in pregnancy. You will likely see the high-risk obstetricians at Minnesota Perinatal Physicians and deliver at the Mother Baby Center at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. Your cardiologist and obstetrician will work closely during your pregnancy, labor and delivery to make sure both you and your baby are safe. A vaginal delivery is preferred when possible.

■ ACHD cardiologist

This doctor knows the details of your heart condition and will determine if it is safe for you to become pregnant.



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Because your heart has to work harder and pump extra blood during pregnancy, you and your baby might be at an increased risk for something going wrong (complications).

Some medicines are not safe to take in pregnancy. Heart medicines known to be harmful to babies are ACE inhibitors (such as Lisinopril®) and warfarin (such as Jantoven®). Your cardiologist will give you directions for when to stop taking these medicines and what to take instead.

■ **Primary care provider**

You should keep seeing your primary care provider for issues not related to your heart or pregnancy. He or she is in charge of your overall medical care.

■ **Anesthesiologist**

This doctor knows your heart condition and what kinds of anesthesia medicines are safe for you during labor and delivery or surgery. The anesthesiologists at Abbott Northwestern Hospital manage patients with congenital heart disease during labor.

■ **Pediatrician**

It is important to find a pediatrician while you are still pregnant. You will need to see him or her shortly after your baby is born. Find a doctor with whom you feel comfortable.

Go to themothertobabycenter.org/find-provider for a doctor in your area. Make sure the pediatrician you choose is covered under your health plan. Call your insurance provider to find out.

Talk with your partner

Your cardiologist and obstetrician may have different opinions about how to manage your pregnancy. Talk with your partner about their advice. Make decisions about your pregnancy care that make you both feel comfortable. Ask for more information if you hear something you don't understand.



You Can Have a Successful Pregnancy

Talk with your ACHD cardiologist and obstetrician before you become pregnant.

Help you and your baby by taking good care of yourself:

- make healthy lifestyle choices (eat well, avoid tobacco/drugs/alcohol, get good sleep and get regular exercise)
- manage your stress
- keep your appointments with your ACHD cardiologist and your obstetrician.

