



Knowledge Brochure Series

MS & PREGNANCY



What people with multiple sclerosis (MS) need to know about pregnancy

If you have MS and are thinking about having children, you may have questions about how MS can affect your pregnancy.

Studies have shown that the incidence of complications for the baby are no different for women who have MS than for women without MS.¹ But if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, it is important to understand the effects that MS may have on conception, pregnancy, and the time after childbirth. It is also important to learn how pregnancy may impact the symptoms and treatment of your MS.



MS treatment during pregnancy

None of the medications currently indicated for treating MS are approved for use by women who are pregnant.¹

It's very important to talk to your doctor about any medication you're taking if you are planning on having children.¹

What men with MS need to know about pregnancy

Men with MS who are planning to start a family may not have to discontinue taking their disease-modifying therapy.² However, men with MS should also talk to their doctors because there are certain kinds of medications both men and women should discontinue before trying to conceive.²

If you are thinking about becoming a father, it is important to talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.²

How pregnancy affects relapses of MS

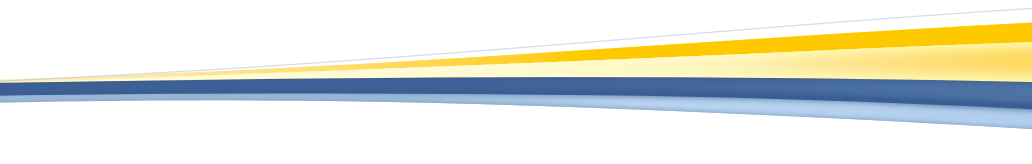
During pregnancy, some women may experience a reduction in relapses. This is thought to be a result of elevated hormone levels and other factors that naturally inhibit immune response.^{1,3} In the first 3-6 months after giving birth there is an increased risk of relapse. These relapses, however, may not contribute to long-term disability.¹

If you experience increased relapses after childbirth, it is important to talk to your doctor about how to manage your symptoms.

Breastfeeding and MS therapy

The decision of whether or not to breastfeed is a very personal choice. Currently, none of the medications indicated for treating MS have been approved for use during breastfeeding.¹ Talk to your doctor before you consider breastfeeding.

If you're considering breastfeeding, it is extremely important to talk to your doctor about what types of medication, if any, you should be taking.



Trust in the experience of Shared Solutions®

While there's no substitute for medical advice from your doctor, **Shared Solutions®** is here to help if you have questions about MS-related issues or need therapy support. **Shared Solutions®** is a comprehensive network of free resources available to people with MS, CarePartners, friends, family, and anyone else who has been touched by MS. Contact **Shared Solutions®** at **1-800-887-8100** or online at **www.sharedsolutions.com**.

The following websites provide additional MS-related information:

- National Multiple Sclerosis Society: **www.nmss.org**
- Multiple Sclerosis Association of America: **www.msaa.com**
- Multiple Sclerosis Foundation: **www.msfocus.org**
- MS Connection: **www.msconnection.org**

**Call 1-800-887-8100
or visit www.sharedsolutions.com
to learn more.**

References: **1.** Pregnancy and reproductive issues. National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS) website. <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Living-Well-With-MS/Family-and-Relationships/Pregnancy>. Accessed November 20, 2014. **2.** Inside MS: MS and pregnancy. NMSS website. <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/NationalMSSociety/media/MSNationalFiles/Brochures/Brochure-MS-and-Pregnancy.pdf>. Accessed November 20, 2014. **3.** Multiple sclerosis: Pregnancy Q&A. Cleveland Clinic website. my.clevelandclinic.org/ccf/media/files/Neurological-Institute/mellen-center/ms-and-pregnancy.pdf. Accessed November 20, 2014.