

# HOW TO DISCUSS PREGNANCY WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

## A Guide for Women Living with Chronic Diseases

Developed in Partnership with Healthcare Professionals and Patient Advocates



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HCP = healthcare professional; HS = hidradenitis suppurativa; IFPA = International Federation of Psoriasis Associations; MG = myasthenia gravis; WoCBA = women of childbearing age



# OVERVIEW

This guide is intended to support open discussions about reproductive health between women of childbearing age, living with chronic diseases, and their healthcare professionals.

Developed in collaboration with experts\*, this guide provides helpful information and key questions for both healthcare professionals and patients to discuss how chronic disease may affect their pregnancy journey. These conversations are important to help everyone involved prepare for the future in the best way possible.



## \*Experts include:

Dan Berry — Behavioural Scientist

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Megan Clowse — Physician, Rheumatology

Sara Franklin — Patient, Epilepsy

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Hellen Wangui Gatherer — Patient, Psoriasis

# DISCUSSING PREGNANCY & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL



## When and How?

Life with a chronic disease can be difficult to navigate, especially when it comes to your reproductive health. However, many women who have a similar diagnosis to you can get pregnant and have healthy babies.

Having the right conversations about pregnancy and reproductive health is crucial in helping you take control of your disease. Even though you may not be planning for a baby right now, it's important you have the right information to help you prepare. Your healthcare team is there to provide information and support that can help you make decisions about pregnancy now and in the future.

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## Top tips from women living with chronic diseases:

Start the conversation about pregnancy early with your clinician. This helps to ease any anxiety and gives more time to discuss options with loved ones.

Write down notes to look at when you get home – or even better, ask if you can record the conversation.

Your healthcare professional may also have recommendations for resources to look at in your own time – don't be afraid to ask!

Have these conversations more than once! It's okay to revisit anything you're unsure about or if you want to learn more – you're not expected to think of everything in one appointment.

Your specialist may not have all the answers, but they may be able to find other resources and support.

“ The pregnancy journey can be beautiful and exciting, but there is anxiety and expectation in the background, discussions with your specialist can help you prepare”

– Woman of childbearing age



# STARTING CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL



## CONTRACEPTION

Do I need to review my current contraception method?

Could my medication affect my contraception methods?

Could my medication or disease impact my ability to get pregnant?



## MANAGING

Could pregnancy and motherhood impact my disease control?

What information is known about my current medication in pregnancy and breastfeeding?

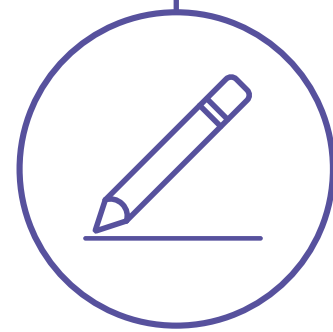
Would a change in my medication be needed?



## BREASTFEEDING

What information is known about my current medication in breastfeeding?

Would a change in my medication be needed?

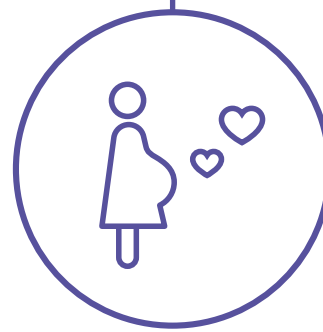


## PLANNING

If I'm planning to get pregnant within the next 12 months, what should I prioritise to bring my disease under control?

What are the risks of passing my disease onto my child?

Are there any screening tests available?



## PREGNANCY & CHILDBIRTH

If I get pregnant, who's involved in my care, and what will their role be?

What are my options for childbirth?

What happens if I get pregnant unexpectedly?

Are there any specific risks associated with pregnancy?



## PARENTING

Will my care return to normal?

Will my disease affect parenting?

How should I prepare?