

Medication and contraception advice

You are currently taking a medication which is known to, or suspected to have the potential to, increase the risks of problems with the way babies develop when taken during pregnancy. This can especially cause problems during the first trimester (up to week 12 of pregnancy) when a woman may not know she is pregnant.

The product information for these medicines advises that pregnancy should be avoided during treatment and that you must use effective contraception throughout your treatment. It may be necessary for you to have a formal pregnancy prevention programme agreement.

Highly effective contraceptive methods that are available include male or female sterilisation and long-acting reversible contraceptive methods such as coils or progesterone-only injections. Progesterone-only implants are also a highly effective form of contraception as long as you aren't taking certain other medications called enzyme inducing medications, (for example some antibiotics, some epilepsy medications, some medications used to treat HIV and St John's wort), please discuss with your GP or specialist if you are unsure.

Other forms of contraception such as combined contraceptives (pills, patches, or vaginal rings) and progesterone-only pills are effective but must be used in combination with a barrier method such as condoms to provide adequate protection against pregnancy.

Things to remember:

- If you are planning a pregnancy, tell your GP or specialist. It may be necessary for you to change your treatment.
- Seek urgent advice if you become pregnant or think you might be pregnant.
- DO NOT STOP taking your medication unless advised by your GP or specialist.
- Have regular discussions with your GP or specialist about your medication and contraception.

If you have any questions about your medication or effective contraception, please discuss these with your GP or specialist.

Yours sincerely,

The Castle Practice