

# Epilepsy Clinic



UHN

## Toronto Western Hospital

### Information for Women Attending the Epilepsy Clinic who are Planning Pregnancy

If you are planning on becoming pregnant, or find out that you are pregnant, please tell your neurologist. Your neurologist will discuss the best medication choices for you.

Keep a record of how often your seizures happen and what medication you are taking. This will help you remember to take your medication and will help your doctor see how you respond to the medication.

Pick up a Seizure diary at the clinic or Epilepsy Toronto. Please phone **416-964-9095** to get your free copy.

#### **What can cause seizures?**

Seizure triggers are:

- lack of sleep
- stress
- fever
- colds
- infections
- allergies
- migraines
- flashing lights

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These triggers are hard to avoid.

### **So, what can you do to reduce your chance of getting seizures?**

Try to get enough sleep

Eat regular meals

Take your medication carefully

### **More about taking your medication**

- Take your antiepileptic medication as prescribed to lower your risk of seizures during your pregnancy.  
In some women, seizures increase during pregnancy and your medication may need to be increased too.  
Tell your doctor if your seizures increase.
- Take folic acid – 5 mg everyday. All women should take folic acid during their reproductive years, whether or not they are pregnant.

We recommend these tests for all pregnant women who have epilepsy. They can be arranged either by your family doctor or your obstetrician.

1. Ultrasound at 12 weeks to find out the important dates of your pregnancy.
2. Ultrasound at 18-20 weeks to find abnormalities such as spina bifida. (Spina bifida is a birth defect that affects the spine and/or spinal cord).
3. Alpha-feto protein (AFP) blood test at weeks 18-20 to check for the risk of spina bifida.
4. Ultrasound at 24-26 weeks to find any heart problems.

### **Resources**

The **Mother-Risk Clinic** at the Hospital for Sick Children is a clinic for women who are pregnant or who are planning pregnancy and taking medication.

They can give you more information about possible risks to the baby depending on the medication(s) you take.

Call **416-813-6780** for more information.

