

# Group B Strep During Pregnancy: Care Instructions



## Your Care Instructions

Group B strep infection is caused by a type of bacteria. It's a different kind of bacteria than the kind that causes strep throat.

You may have this kind of bacteria in your body. Sometimes it may cause an infection, but most of the time it doesn't make you sick or cause symptoms. But if you pass the bacteria to your baby during the birth, it can cause serious health problems for your baby.

If you have this bacteria in your body, you will get antibiotics when you are in labor. Antibiotics help prevent problems for a newborn baby.

After birth, doctors will watch and may test your baby. If your baby tests positive for Group B strep, he or she will get antibiotics.

If you plan to breastfeed your baby, don't worry. It will be safe to breastfeed.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

- If your doctor has prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed. Do not stop taking them just because you feel better. You need to take the full course of antibiotics.
- Tell your doctor if you are allergic to any antibiotic.
- If your water breaks, go to the hospital right away. Your doctor will give you antibiotics to help protect your baby from infection.
- Tell the doctors and nurses at the hospital that you tested positive for group B strep.

## When should you call for help?

**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have symptoms of a urinary tract infection. These may include:
  - Pain or burning when you urinate.
  - A frequent need to urinate without being able to pass much urine.
  - Pain in the flank, which is just below the rib cage and above the waist on either side of the back.
  - Blood in your urine.
  - A fever.
- You think your water has broken.
- You have pain in your belly or pelvis.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

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