

# Thrombocytopenia: After Pregnancy

What you can do to decrease risks for you and a future pregnancy



Things to do **EVERY DAY**  
for healthy women and babies:

**Exercise** – 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week

**Vitamin** – 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folic Acid per day

**Educate yourself** about medicines and chemicals that can cause birth defects

**Reproductive life planning** – set your personal goals for birth control and future children

**Yearly doctor visits** to discuss physical and mental wellness

**Diet** – Vegetables, fruits, and whole grains daily

**Avoid tobacco, drugs, and alcohol**

**Your partner, friends, and family** should be sources of support

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## What is thrombocytopenia and how does it affect pregnancy?

- Thrombocytopenia is a condition where you have a low number of platelets in your blood. Platelets are blood cells that help stop bleeding. People with low platelets may experience easy bleeding. Tell your health care provider if you bleed easily, such as when you brush your teeth.
- Low platelets are common in pregnancy and can be a complication of other conditions, such as lupus and preeclampsia.
- If you were pregnant and no other reason for your low platelets was found, you may be diagnosed with either gestational thrombocytopenia or idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP).

## What is the difference between gestational thrombocytopenia and ITP?

With both gestational thrombocytopenia and ITP, you will have low platelets. Gestational thrombocytopenia is a harmless condition and will not affect your baby. ITP is an autoimmune disorder where you make substances called antibodies that attack your platelets. Women with ITP usually have a healthy pregnancy, but there can be serious risks of bleeding. Regardless of the cause, low platelets can be treated. A hematologist, a doctor specializing in blood disorders, may help with your treatment during pregnancy. A pediatrician should be involved to help with potential bleeding complications in your baby.

## Management of low platelets after pregnancy

After pregnancy, your provider checks your platelet levels regularly and may diagnose you with gestational thrombocytopenia or ITP. You can also see a hematologist. If you have gestational thrombocytopenia, you will not need treatment. If you have ITP, it can be treated with various medications, including those that are safe to use while breastfeeding.

## What can you expect during your next pregnancy?

- If you have gestational thrombocytopenia, it may reoccur in your next pregnancy, but it is generally harmless.
- If you have ITP, you can't always predict what will happen during your next pregnancy. If you are thinking about getting pregnant again, talk to your provider about which hospital near you can provide the best level of care for you and your baby in case either of you need special treatment during and after delivery. Your health care providers can help you create a plan to control your ITP before and during a future pregnancy to help you to stay well and have a healthy baby.

## Remember your ABCs:

folic  cid     reastfeeding     ontraception

## For more information, go to:

Every Woman California: [everywomancalifornia.org](http://everywomancalifornia.org)

March of Dimes: [marchofdimes.com](http://marchofdimes.com)

Platelet Disorder Support Association: [pdsa.org/assets/pdf/itp\\_preg\\_web1.pdf](http://pdsa.org/assets/pdf/itp_preg_web1.pdf)