

# YOUR CARE POLMED

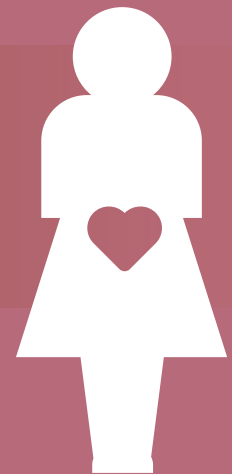
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## MANAGING DIABETES DURING PREGNANCY

Gestational diabetes (diabetes that develops during pregnancy) is increasing worldwide, and its prevalence in South Africa is estimated at between

**1.6% and 25.8%.**



Managing Diabetes during pregnancy is essential to avoid being admitted to hospital and risks to the health of mother and child.

### WHAT CAUSES GESTATIONAL DIABETES?

During pregnancy, the body undergoes significant changes, some of which may impact its ability to produce sufficient insulin.

The risk for gestational diabetes increases in pregnant women:

- older than 35
- who have a BMI of 30 and higher
- with a family history of diabetes



### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

The symptoms aren't always easy to recognise and may be dismissed as the effects of pregnancy.

However, you should look out for the following symptoms and seek help, if necessary:

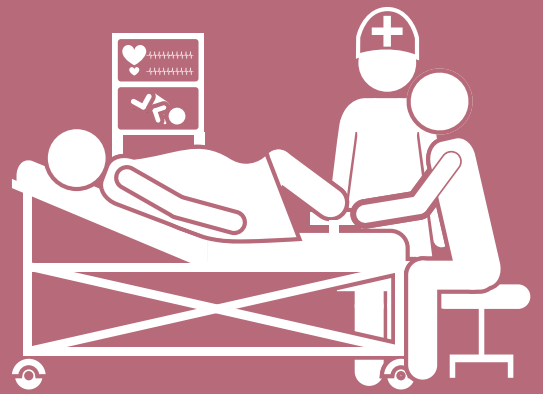
- Increased thirst
- A dry mouth
- Tiredness
- An unusual need to urinate more often
- Genital itching or thrush
- Blurred eyesight



### RISKS OF UNMANAGED DIABETES DURING PREGNANCY

Poorly managed diabetes during pregnancy presents several risks:

- An increased risk for C-sections
- Premature labour
- Pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure during pregnancy)
- Type 2 diabetes after pregnancy
- A larger-than-usual baby
- Low blood sugar in your baby
- Jaundice in your baby
- Stillbirth



### PREVENTING AND MANAGING GESTATIONAL DIABETES

The first step is diagnosis, so get your blood sugar tested. Other guidelines include:

#### Follow a healthy diet

Choose healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains and legumes, and exclude alcohol and processed foods.



#### Regular exercise

Try yoga, walking, swimming or riding a stationary bike with the guidance of your doctor.

#### Take your prescribed medication

Your doctor will prescribe medication that is both effective and safe for your body.

Not every pregnant woman will develop gestational diabetes, but if you do, visit your doctor regularly to protect your health and that of your unborn baby

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