

Patients with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) often have unique concerns about how their condition will affect them and their baby when they become pregnant or consider having a child. These concerns can make patients feel anxious and burdened with worry that becoming pregnant could be a mistake.

By taking a proactive role and addressing a patient's concerns early and with easy-to-understand language, you can help bring peace of mind and give your patient confidence that they can have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby.

**Your patient may come with a list of questions or may need help knowing what questions to ask. Use the below list of common patient questions as a starting point to create a comfortable, open dialogue among your patient, the entire health care team, and you.**



## Planning for pregnancy

- What health risks should I know about if I have IBD and become pregnant?
- Should I schedule a colonoscopy and/or magnetic resonance enterography (MRE) before I try to conceive?
- Should I change my diet or lifestyle before trying to become pregnant? Should I add any vitamins or dietary supplements?
- Is it safe for me to stay on my IBD medications while I'm trying to get pregnant and during pregnancy?
  - Will I need any additional medications while I'm pregnant?
- How can I keep my IBD in remission while I'm trying to conceive and during pregnancy?
  - If my IBD is not under control, will it affect my pregnancy?

## Creating an IBD pregnancy care team

- Who should be on my IBD pregnancy care team?
  - When should I start forming my team and how will I know who should be included?

- What is each team member's role?
  - How often should I check in with each person on my care team?
- How can I keep all members of my care team informed and make sure they're communicating with one another?
- Who should I turn to in an emergency or if I have a complication?
- Who should be present at my delivery?
- Who should I follow up with after I have my baby?

## Thinking about childbirth and postpartum

- What are my delivery options with IBD?
- Am I eligible for an epidural if I have IBD?
  - Will I be able to receive pain medication during labor?
- What is my risk of a postpartum IBD flare? How can I prepare for and manage flares after I give birth?



**“It can be helpful to proactively ask patients about their family planning and encourage them that if they are interested in becoming pregnant they should begin asking their care team about the best course of action well in advance of their plan to become pregnant.”**

Dr. Rajeev Jain, MD, Gastroenterologist



**Additional resources, helpful tips and tools, and more for you and your patient can be found on [ibdparenthoodproject.org](https://ibdparenthoodproject.org)**