



A handy fact sheet on atomoxetine in pregnancy and breastfeeding

There is also a leaflet with information on medicines in pregnancy, including other medicines for your symptoms

What should I do if I am taking atomoxetine and want to start a family?

The best option is always to plan in advance. If you plan to start a family talk about this with your doctor. It may be possible to:

- Switch to another medicine that has a known lower risk. Atomoxetine has a unique way of working so it may be difficult to find an alternative
- Take other steps to reduce any risks, such as stopping any other medication that is no longer needed
- Take a lower dose of atomoxetine but there is a risk of going too low. This is because smaller doses are unlikely to work and keeping well is very important for the well-being of your baby.

If atomoxetine can help you manage your ADHD then taking atomoxetine is likely to be much safer than your ADHD symptoms coming back

I have just found out I am pregnant and am wondering if I should stop my atomoxetine?

- There is no urgent need to stop atomoxetine as your baby will have already been exposed to the medicine
- Do see your doctor in the next day or two
- Decide together on a plan of action. You may need a little time to look through some information and make your choice
- The rest of this leaflet should help you with your decision
- Without the atomoxetine you will be at risk of ADHD symptoms coming back again so it is usually best to carry on, with careful monitoring
- **If** stopping atomoxetine becomes part of your plan, agree with your care team on how you want to do this.
- Coming off it over several weeks or longer gives the body more time to adjust
- You might want to go back on atomoxetine again after your baby has been born.

What are the risks of continuing atomoxetine during early pregnancy?

- **The first trimester (i.e. months 1-3)** is when your baby's organs are developing
- There is very little research about atomoxetine being taken during pregnancy
- It may double the risk of having a miscarriage.

What about later on in pregnancy?

- During the second and third trimesters (month 4 onwards) increases in body weight and fluid dilute the atomoxetine
- You will not usually need an increase in dose
- But if you start to feel that the atomoxetine is not working quite as well then this could be the reason and you should see your doctor
- You may be advised to stop atomoxetine close to delivery, or you may be advised to carry on. Make sure your Doctor advises you what to do. Talk to your doctor before making any changes
- Your baby may be born with a lower Apgar score. Apgar measures *Appearance, Pulse, Grimace, Activity* and *Respiration*
- This is likely to quickly right itself but you may want to have hospital support when you have your baby.

There isn't enough information to be sure that atomoxetine is safe in pregnancy but if your ADHD symptoms get worse there may be a higher risk of complications

What about delivery time?

- After delivery and when things have settled your atomoxetine can usually be restarted at the dose you were taking before pregnancy.

What about atomoxetine and breastfeeding?

- Atomoxetine passes into breast milk but the exact amounts are not known
- This does not mean it is dangerous to breastfeed if you have a healthy full-term baby, but as there is very little information most advice will say not to breastfeed



- If your baby is born early (pre-term) then get advice from your doctor. You may have to stop atomoxetine as your baby may not be able to safely get rid of the atomoxetine
- If your baby becomes restless, very sleepy or develops feeding problems stop breastfeeding and quickly seek medical advice.

What about later on and baby's development?

- As there is a lack of research about atomoxetine being taken during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- It is not known if there are any effects on physical or mental development or behaviour over the first years of the child's life.

What else can I do to help myself stay well?

- Don't take any other medicines that you don't need. Check with your pharmacist before buying any medicines, including vitamins and supplements
- Eat a healthy balanced diet rich in fruit and vegetables
- Exercise regularly
- Don't ignore feelings of thirst - drink plenty of

water so you don't become dehydrated.

- If you are being sick during your pregnancy then you are more likely to become dehydrated. Drink plenty of water and see your doctor. There are treatments that can help with the sickness
- Check with your healthcare team to see if you should be taking any vitamin supplements such as folic acid, iron or vitamin D
- Go for any extra blood tests needed
- If you feel stressed look at non-drug ways to help you relax but do not mix up the effects of being pregnant with symptoms of becoming unwell.
- Ensure you have a support network in place, so there is someone who can help you recognise if you are struggling.

**Remember:
Babies do better with well mums**

The Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Medicines
Information Service is open from
9am–4pm Monday-Friday on 03-83453190

You can make your own notes here. Write down any questions you may want to ask your health care team

The small print: This leaflet is to help you understand more about atomoxetine in pregnancy. You must also read the manufacturer's Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) Leaflet. You may find more on the internet but beware as internet-based information is not always accurate. Do not share medicines with anyone else.

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