

Pregnancy after having a premature baby

This fact sheet has been developed to support discussions with your healthcare provider about future pregnancies after having a premature baby.

If you had a premature baby, it's normal to worry about it happening again. There isn't anything you can do to guarantee you won't give birth early again, but there are things that you and your healthcare team can do to try and reduce that chance.

If I have had a premature birth, will it happen again?

If your baby was born before 37 weeks, you have a higher chance of another preterm birth. This chance increases if you have more than one baby born premature.

How premature your baby was may also have an effect. The earlier you gave birth to your previous baby, the higher the chance of giving birth early again.

BUT this does not mean that you will give birth early again. Many women who have a preterm birth go on to have another baby at full-term (after 37 weeks of pregnancy).

What can my healthcare provider do to help reduce my risk of having another baby born preterm?

Your healthcare team can take steps to help reduce your chance of having another premature birth. The treatment or care you have may depend on why you had a premature birth.

If your baby was born before 34 weeks, you should have an appointment with the hospital where your baby was born. At this appointment, you can talk about the possible reasons why your baby was born early and how best to plan and manage another pregnancy.

Talk to your doctor, midwife or Aboriginal health worker before your baby is discharged home to book this appointment. Together, you will be able to decide when the best time would be to have this appointment.

If you become pregnant again, you will likely have closer monitoring during your pregnancy. Your healthcare provider may recommend extra ultrasounds, medications or treatments that can help to reduce your chance of having another preterm birth.

What can I do to reduce the chance of having another baby born preterm?

- Wait at least 12 - 18 months before your next pregnancy to allow your body to fully recover from pregnancy and birth. Talk to your healthcare provider about options for contraception.
- Contact your GP, midwife, Aboriginal health worker, or hospital clinic as soon as you know you're pregnant. It is important to get a plan of care for your pregnancy by 10 weeks.
- If you have urinary tract infection (UTI) symptoms during pregnancy, talk to your doctor or midwife and have it treated as soon as possible.
- Avoid smoking, alcohol, and recreational drugs, as they increase your chance of premature birth. Talk to your doctor, midwife or Aboriginal health worker for support to quit.
- Have a smoke-free home and car by encouraging those around you to not smoke. Your doctor or midwife can also support your partner to quit.
- Maintain a healthy diet and weight.

Where can I get support now?

Talk to your doctor, midwife, GP or Aboriginal health worker about support available in your local community.

Having a baby born early can be a difficult time. If you need emotional support, you can contact a free mental health care service called ForWhen on 1300 242 322. They will help you to find and access the help you need.

Additional supports:



www.raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/premature-babies-sick-babies

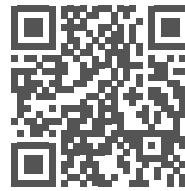
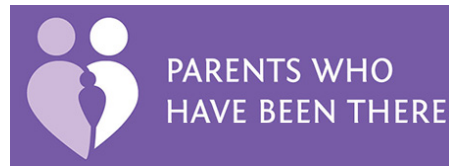
Raisingchildren.net.au provide free, reliable, up-to-date and independent information to help your family grow and thrive together.



www.miraclebabies.org.au

The Nurture Program is Australia's only comprehensive parent to parent support program available from a threatened pregnancy, during the time spent in a Neonatal Intensive

Care Unit (NICU) or Special Care Nursery (SCN), the transition to home and beyond. This support also includes the loss of a baby cared for by a NICU/SCN. This program is free to Australia's miracle families and includes play and support groups after discharge.



www.parentswho.com.au

Parents Who Have Been There is a not-for-profit charity consisting of Adelaide parents who had their babies born early or born sick go through Neonatal Care. We offer support to parents and families throughout the Neonatal journey, in hospital and beyond. With all we do we aim to support families where we can, letting them know that we have been where they are now, we have walked a similar journey and we do truly understand.



www.lifeslittletreasures.org.au

Australia's foremost charity dedicated to providing support, friendship and information, specifically tailored for families of premature or sick babies.

For more information

Contact your local hospital, doctor, midwife, GP or Aboriginal health worker.

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

