Family Planning  
For congenital heart patients

This section of the Congenital Heart Conditions notebook explains what women with congenital heart disease who may want to have children need to consider.

If You Want to Try to Become Pregnant

Many women with congenital heart disease have successful pregnancies. Talk with your provider about your risks during pregnancy.

Parents who have congenital heart disease have a higher risk of having children with congenital heart disease. Women may have an increased risk of cardiac complications during pregnancy, delivery, and beyond.

If you decide you would like to try to become pregnant:

• Talk with your cardiologist before you become pregnant. You may need an evaluation to assure you have the safest pregnancy possible.

• To make sure you and your baby are in the best health possible during the pregnancy and delivery, your health care provider may suggest a care plan that requires frequent visits and careful monitoring.

• Only a few heart conditions would cause your cardiologist to advise you not to have children.

If you are already pregnant:

• Call your cardiologist as soon as possible.

• Your cardiologist may recommend that you see an obstetrician who specializes in managing high-risk pregnancies.

To Prevent Pregnancy

If you decide not to become pregnant, there are many birth control methods available. Talk with your doctor about methods that are safe for you to use.
Adoption

If you are thinking about adopting a child, there are many helpful Internet resources, such as the Northwest Adoption Exchange at www.nwae.org.

Northwest Adoption Exchange is a service that connects families with children who are awaiting adoption.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

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