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Planning a Pregnancy When Living with HIV

Adapted with permission from the Women's College Hospital

Information for HIV Positive New Moms

**YOU CAN HAVE A
HEALTHY BABY IF YOU
ARE LIVING WITH HIV**



YOU WANT TO HAVE A BABY

A large, glowing red egg is positioned on the left side of the frame. A single, purple sperm cell with a long tail is swimming towards the egg from the upper right corner. The background is solid black.

For a baby to be conceived,
an egg from a female needs
to be joined with a sperm
from a male.

GETTING PREGNANT SAFELY

A young man and woman are shown in profile, looking at each other. The man is on the left, wearing a grey sweater over a black shirt. The woman is on the right, wearing a white hoodie with a fur-lined hood. They are outdoors with green foliage in the background.

Having unprotected sex (without a condom) is never completely free of a risk of HIV transmission.

People living with HIV can plan to have a baby.

CARING FOR YOUR BODY BEFORE GETTING PREGNANT

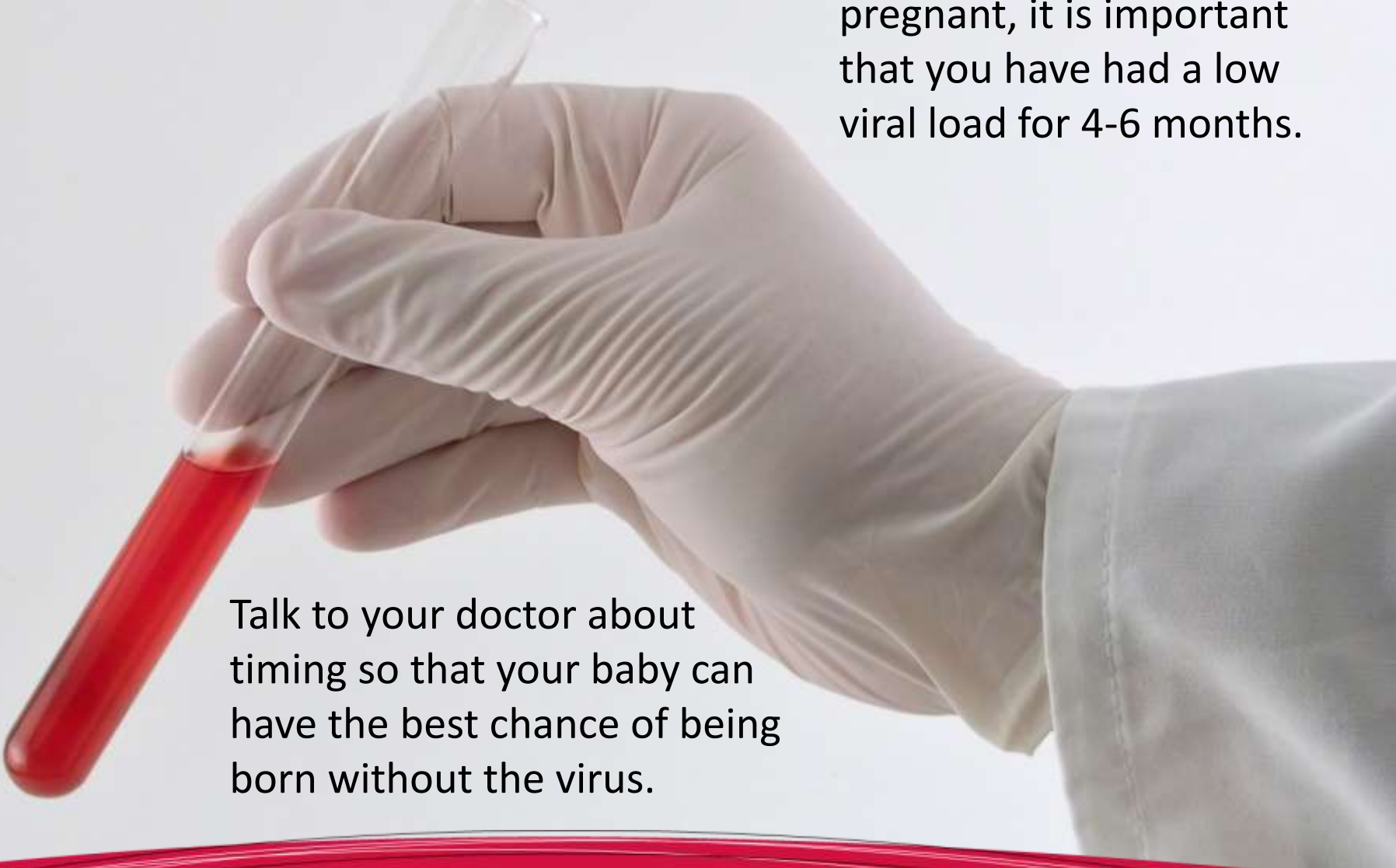
You can have a healthy baby if you are HIV positive.

By taking the medicine your doctor prescribes, you can lower the chance of transmitting the virus to your baby from 25% to less than 1%.



LOW VIRAL LOAD

Before you try to get pregnant, it is important that you have had a low viral load for 4-6 months.

A close-up photograph of a hand wearing a white latex glove, holding a clear glass test tube. The test tube is tilted, and a small amount of bright red liquid is visible at the bottom. The background is a plain, light grey.

Talk to your doctor about timing so that your baby can have the best chance of being born without the virus.



There are lots of other things that you can do to get ready for pregnancy.

- Take a multivitamin that has folic acid in it.
- Eat healthy.



- Get tested and treated (when possible) for sexually transmitted infections.




- If you use street drugs or smoke, try to stop before you become pregnant.

- Alcohol can hurt your baby. It is best not to drink alcohol when you are pregnant. Talk to your healthcare provider for support.





- Take care of your teeth and gums. Visit a dentist before you get pregnant and during pregnancy.

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- A woman wearing a black helmet, sunglasses, a white sleeveless top, and black shorts is riding a black mountain bike on a grassy hill. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background features a clear blue sky, a body of water, and distant mountains.
- Be physically active and maintain a healthy weight.

- Maintain healthy relationships.



HIV TREATMENT DURING PREGNANCY

Medications that are given for HIV are called antiretroviral therapy (ART).

If you are pregnant and have HIV, it is important that you take ART throughout your pregnancy.

This will lower the chance of HIV being passed to your baby.



FIND A GOOD DOCTOR

Spend time with your doctor and develop a relationship with him/her.

Ask questions that you have and talk about any side effects you have from the medication.



TELLING OTHERS



Remember that disclosing your HIV status is your choice.

However, you should tell any individuals you have had sex with or shared needles with so that they can be tested.

You should also tell healthcare professionals who you see so that they can look after your health appropriately.

IT IS YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE TO HAVE A BABY

Remember that it is your right to choose to have a baby and you can do so with minimal risk to your child.

Take care of yourself and get the support and information that you need to have a healthy pregnancy.



Support in Saskatchewan

For more information about available support related to HIV in Saskatchewan, please visit: <https://www.skshiv.ca/map-of-services>.

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