

INFORMATION SHEET

GESTATIONAL DIABETES AND POSTNATAL MONITORING OF THE NEWBORN

Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is a carbohydrate metabolism disorder that can develop during pregnancy and usually manifests as elevated blood glucose levels.

What happens after childbirth?

Treatment for gestational diabetes is discontinued postpartum as GDM is caused by pregnancy hormones and therefore blood glucose levels usually normalise after giving birth. However, it is important to remember that gestational diabetes is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Therefore, maintaining healthy lifestyle habits after childbirth is essential. It can reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life, help to maintain a stable body weight and support a healthy lifestyle.

Please inform your family doctor about your gestational diabetes diagnosis after childbirth!

All patients with gestational diabetes should visit the gestational diabetes midwife three months after giving birth to assess the three month average blood glucose level (HbA1c) and check blood lipid values.

Monitoring of the newborn

Newborns of mothers with gestational diabetes have an increased risk of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) immediately after birth and during the first weeks of life. Therefore, these newborns have their blood glucose measured from capillary blood at least three times. If blood glucose are below normal level, additional measurements are performed as per guideline, and treatment initiated if necessary. Treatment may include more frequent or enhanced feeding, applying glucose gel to the inner cheek, or, in more severe cases, intravenous glucose administration to prevent brain injury that can be caused by hypoglycemia by hypoglycemia.

These newborns also have a higher risk of developing jaundice (yellowing of the skin). The rise of bilirubin is usually the highest between days 3 and 6 of life. Jaundice does not occur only in infants of mothers with gestational diabetes; mild jaundice is common in all newborns. For babies with a noticeably yellow skin tone, bilirubin levels are checked either with an ear lobe measurement or with blood test. Based on the bilirubin level, appropriate follow-up and treatment are arranged. If bilirubin levels over normal level, phototherapy is used as treatment in the hospital. as treatment.