### Pre-pregnancy advice

**Refer to a specialist in hypertensive disorders of pregnancy.**

**Antihypertensive treatment**
- Advise that angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs)\(^1\) increase risk of congenital abnormalities.
- Discuss alternative treatment if ACE inhibitors or ARBs are being taken for other conditions such as renal disease.
- Advise that thiazide or thiazide-like diuretics may increase risk of congenital abnormalities and neonatal complications.
- Discuss alternative antihypertensive treatment for planned pregnancy.
- Advise that other antihypertensive treatments have not shown an increased risk of congenital malformation (but limited evidence).

**Lifestyle advice**
- Offer pregnant women with chronic hypertension advice on:
  - weight management
  - exercise
  - healthy eating
  - lowering the amount of salt in their diet.
- Provide this advice in line with the NICE guideline on hypertension in adults: diagnosis and treatment.

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\(^1\)In 2014, the MHRA issued a drug safety update on ‘ACE inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor antagonists: not for use in pregnancy’ that states ‘Use in women who are planning pregnancy should be avoided unless absolutely necessary, in which case the potential risks and benefits should be discussed’.