

INFORMATION SHEET

Preparing for Pregnancy - Maternal Age

expert care for women

What is the ideal age to have a baby?

The optimum time, physically, for a woman to have a baby is between 25 and 30 years of age. During this age range, you have the highest incidence of fertility, the best likelihood of a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby and the lowest risk of miscarriage.

What are the complications of having a baby after 30 years of age?

The woman's ability to conceive a pregnancy decreases markedly after the age of 30. By the time a woman is 40 years of age, she has lost 90 per cent of the fertility that she had at age 30.

The incidence of miscarriage also increases with age and after the age of 35 the risk of increases by ten percent each year.

During pregnancy, older women are more at risk of hypertension, gestational diabetes and are much more likely to deliver their baby by a caesarean section.

As maternal age increases so does the chance of a multiple birth. Also, older women are more likely to require in vitro fertilisation (IVF), which increases the chance of multiple birth.

Are there complications associated with being less than 25 years of age?

Between 17 and 25 years there are no significant risks associated with age. If you are less than 17 years of age the risk of premature birth and high blood pressure also increases.