



## Pregnancy & Bipolar Disorder: Planning for Pregnancy

**Careful planning of pregnancy is necessary to avoid risks to the fetus and minimize symptoms of bipolar disorder.**



**Establish long-term stability.** A sustained period (4 to 6 months) of mood stability before attempting conception is recommended. Consult your physician to discuss planning of pregnancy. If possible, try to involve your partner in these discussions.



**Review medications.** Some women may need to continue with their prescribed medication while others may be able to reduce the dose or taper off their medication before attempting conception. Medication changes should be made under the close supervision of your doctor.



**Stay in close contact with your doctor.** Regular monitoring by your doctor is recommended to determine the effect of medication change on your mood. Relapse risk is high when medications are discontinued or doses are reduced during pregnancy, so the sooner you have a plan for your treatments, the better.



**Consider a specialist.** If you are not already under the care of a psychiatrist, you should discuss with your doctor the possibility of referral for specialist psychiatric assessment.

**This Tip Sheet is part of a series on Pregnancy & Bipolar Disorder. For more on this topic, visit the Knowledge Center at [www.isbd.org](http://www.isbd.org).**