Yes, you can do it!

You are able to become pregnant and give birth to a healthy baby as a woman with a spinal cord injury.

This brochure touches on topics that we go into more detail on in our free downloadable booklet Pregnancy and Spinal Cord Injury available at: sexualhealth.sci-bc.ca/scipregnancy

**Medications**
Review medications and determine their safety in pregnancy (and postpartum if you are breastfeeding).

**Bladder Function**
As with any pregnancy, as the baby grows there is added pressure on the bladder which causes the urinary bladder capacity to decrease. This alone may necessitate a change in how you manage your bladder.

**Bowel Function**
Many pregnant women experience constipation during pregnancy due to increase in size of uterus that puts pressure on the bowel.

**Autonomic Dysreflexia**
If your SCI is above T6 and you have experienced autonomic dysreflexia (AD) as a result of your injury, there is an increased likelihood that AD may happen during your pregnancy and labour.

**Deep Vein Thrombosis**
Pregnant women in general are at increased risk for deep vein thrombosis (DVT).

**Spasticity**
As your body changes during pregnancy, you may notice an increase in your spasms.

**Mobility + Accessibility**
It is important to bear in mind that your accessibility needs may change as your body changes during pregnancy (e.g. examination table height, office door, washroom facilities, wheelchair scales).

**Skin Integrity**
Throughout your pregnancy and in the first few weeks postpartum it is important to do regular skin checks to monitor skin condition.

**Equipment**
Your equipment for everyday needs may change during pregnancy and for the first few weeks post delivery

**Planning for the Birth**
Your choice for mode of delivery is an important discussion to have with your maternal care provider.

**Selecting a Labour Support Team**
Planning to have a supportive team of health care providers, friends and/or family ready to help during and after labour can be beneficial

**Labour**
Even if your sensation is altered below the level of SCI, you may experience signals elsewhere that you are going into labour.

**Once Baby Arrives**
Once you have welcomed your newborn into the world and are ready to return home, there are preparations to be made.

**Emotional Health**
All new mothers should be aware of the possibility for mental and emotional health alterations following birth.

**Breastfeeding**
You may wish to consult your care team about whether breastfeeding is possible given the level of SCI.

**Resources**
For more information visit: sexualhealth.sci-bc.ca/scipregnancy
Getting Started

Whether you are thinking about becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant, this is an exciting time!

There are some things to keep in mind along the journey to maintain health and wellness for you and your baby. If possible, consult with your doctor early on in the planning stage of becoming pregnant. In general, it is important to have a family doctor who provides consistent care to you throughout your life milestones. Wherever you are in your perinatal journey, you need a referral to an obstetrician or maternal fetal medicine specialist to talk about planning for your unique health needs. Ideally this would occur prior to you becoming pregnant.

You may find it helpful to talk to other women with SCI who are mothers to gain peer support and encouragement. Speak with members of your care team to explore ways to connect with other women with SCI who are mothers, contact a local SCI-related organization like SCI BC, and utilize the various resources listed in the link at the end of the brochure.

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