

Rh negative blood group and pregnancy

Information about how to prevent complications during pregnancy when the mother has an Rh negative blood group and the child an Rh positive blood group.

When you registered with the antenatal clinic, you submitted a blood test that shows you have an Rh negative blood group and that the child you are expecting has an Rh positive blood group. This means the child has a factor in its blood – an Rh factor – that you do not have.

During childbirth, small quantities of the child's blood may enter your blood vessels. There is also a slight risk that this can happen during pregnancy. Your body may then begin building antibodies against the child's red blood corpuscles, so-called Rh immunisation. These antibodies can be passed via the placenta from mother to child. These antibodies may give rise to anaemia in the child. While Rh immunisation in the mother and anaemia in the child are unusual, it is important to prevent them.

How we prevent Rh immunisation

You should have a blood test taken between weeks 25 and 29 of your pregnancy to find out if you need any additional checks while you are pregnant. You will be given an injection between weeks 28 and 30 of your pregnancy to prevent activation of your immune system and the formation of anti-bodies. You will also be given an injection in connection with delivery.

Sometimes the child will also need treatment after delivery. This takes place primarily using phototherapy, which is a simple, pain-free treatment.