

Congenital heart disease and pregnancy

February 8 2023, by Alex Osiadacz



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Congenital heart disease is the most commonly diagnosed disorder in newborns worldwide. While babies born with this condition are living longer and healthier lives, some may go undiagnosed until adulthood.

Dr. Katia Bravo, a Mayo Clinic cardiologist, explains the risks that

pregnancy poses for those diagnosed with [congenital heart disease](#).

Congenital heart disease is an abnormality in your heart's structure that you're born with. These [birth defects](#) can alter the way blood flows through the heart and cause a wide range of issues that may be life-threatening without intervention or surgery.

"Many times, (patients) can experience arrhythmias, palpitations, problems with shortness of breath, and all of these symptoms can actually trigger much more consequences in older congenital heart disease population," says Dr. Bravo.

Pregnancy can create a new set of risks for someone with congenital heart disease. Blood volume increases during pregnancy, which can alter the flow, create differences in [blood pressure](#) and create a potentially dangerous situation.

"Understanding that pregnancy can potentially lead to volume overload, maybe some rhythm problems and acknowledging the role of medical and procedural management," say Dr. Bravo.

She recommends preconception counseling for those with diagnosed congenital heart disease.

"They are going to need somebody that can look after them in all the aspects involving exercise, stress testing, echocardiography, advanced imaging, specialized interventions and also surgery," says Dr. Bravo.

2023 Mayo Clinic News Network.

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: Congenital heart disease and pregnancy (2023, February 8) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-02-congenital-heart-disease-pregnancy.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.