

## How to reduce the risk of your baby being stillborn:

(Adapted from the article "5 ways to reduce the risk of stillbirth", December 2018, written by Professor Jonathan Morris and Dr Adrienne Gordon from the University of Sydney).

Tragically all pregnancies have a risk, albeit small, of ending in a baby being stillborn.

About two thousand babies are stillborn in Australia each year.

There are, however, a number of steps each woman can take to reduce her risk of this happening in her own pregnancy:

1. Go to sleep on your side in the last trimester (from ~ 28 weeks onwards). You may wake up during the night in another position; that doesn't matter. What does matter is that you go to sleep on your side, either side. Do NOT go to sleep laying on your back.
2. Seek help at once if you notice a reduction in your fetal movements. If the baby starts moving less, this may reflect some underlying problem with your pregnancy, so seek help at once; do NOT wait until the next day.
3. If you are a smoker, get help to stop smoking.
4. Attend regular antenatal care visits as recommended to monitor your baby's growth and well-being – as well as your own well-being.
5. Optimise the timing of giving birth to your baby (if possible).

The absolute risk of Stillbirth from being over-due (past the "due day" or EDD) is very low, affecting about 1 in 1,000 women. But women in higher risk groups should be more closely monitored for their risk of Stillbirth and, if necessary, have their labour induced. This includes women who:

- are older than 35 years of age, and especially older than 40, at the time
- smoke
- are overweight or obese (BMI of 25 or more)
- have pre-existing Diabetes (or perhaps even Gestational Diabetes)
- are having their first baby
- have had a previous stillbirth baby
- are Indigenous or from other disadvantaged groups,
- have South Asian heritage
- probably also IVF pregnancies (especially if using ICSI)
- have pregnancy complications such as poor fetal growth (IUGR), Hypertension, Pre-Eclampsia and so on.