

## **Maternal Health and Autism Risk: Causes During Pregnancy and Preventive Care**

Pregnancy is a crucial period for a baby's brain development. During this time, the baby's brain forms millions of neural connections that influence future learning, behaviour, and emotional regulation. Research shows that maternal health and environmental factors during pregnancy may influence the risk of neurodevelopmental conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Autism is a complex condition influenced by both genetic and environmental factors. While it cannot always be prevented, maintaining good maternal health can support healthy fetal brain development.

### **Possible Risk Factors During Pregnancy**

**Some factors during pregnancy may increase the risk of developmental difficulties:**

- High maternal stress or anxiety
- Infections during pregnancy
- Poor nutrition or nutrient deficiencies
- Exposure to environmental toxins or pollution
- Maternal medical conditions such as diabetes or thyroid problems
- Advanced parental age

**These factors may influence the developing brain through biological mechanisms such as hormonal changes, immune responses, and epigenetic influences.**

**Preventive Care for Healthy Pregnancy**

**Expectant mothers can support their baby's development through healthy prenatal care:**

- ✓ Regular prenatal check-ups
- ✓ Balanced nutritious diet with folic acid and iron
- ✓ Maintaining good emotional well-being
- ✓ Adequate sleep and rest
- ✓ Avoiding harmful substances and toxins
- ✓ Proper management of medical conditions

## **Conclusion**

**Healthy maternal lifestyle and regular medical care during pregnancy play an important role in supporting optimal brain development in babies. Awareness and early guidance can help parents create the best possible environment for their child's growth and development. If parents notice developmental concerns in their child, seeking professional guidance early can help provide the right support and intervention.**