

# Guanfacine (Intuniv®, Tenex®)

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This sheet is about exposure to guanfacine in pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare providers.

## ***What is guanfacine?***

Guanfacine is a medication approved to treat high blood pressure and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It has also been used for Gilles de la Tourette's syndrome and opioid withdrawal. Some brand names for guanfacine are Intuniv® and Tenex®.

Sometimes when people find out they are pregnant, they think about changing how they take their medication or stopping their medication altogether. However, it is important to talk with your healthcare providers before making any changes to how you take this medication. Your healthcare providers can talk with you about the benefits of treating your condition and the risks of untreated illness during pregnancy. If you have been taking this medication regularly, you should not stop taking it suddenly. If you do plan to stop this medication, it should be stopped slowly under the care of your healthcare provider.

## ***I take guanfacine. Can it make it harder for me to get pregnant?***

Studies have not been done to see if guanfacine could make it harder to get pregnant. Animal studies did not find that guanfacine affected fertility.

## ***Does taking guanfacine increase the chance for miscarriage?***

Miscarriage can occur in any pregnancy. Studies have not been done to see if guanfacine could increase the chance for a miscarriage.

## ***Does taking guanfacine increase the chance of birth defects?***

Every pregnancy starts out with a 3-5% chance of having a birth defect. This is called the background risk. Guanfacine has not been well studied. Birth defects were not seen in a small study on 30 pregnancies exposed to guanfacine. Animal studies did not suggest that guanfacine would increase the chance of birth defects.

## ***Does taking guanfacine in pregnancy increase the chance of other pregnancy-related problems?***

Studies have not been done to see if guanfacine increases the chance for pregnancy-related problems such as preterm delivery (birth before week 37) or low birth weight (weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces [2500 grams] at birth). One study looked at the pregnancies of 30 women who were given guanfacine to treat preeclampsia. Preeclampsia is a pregnancy-related condition that can cause symptoms such as high blood pressure or fluid retention. The study on guanfacine did not find changes in the baby's heart rate during pregnancy.

## ***Does taking guanfacine in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?***

Studies have not been done to see if guanfacine can cause behavior or learning issues for the child after prenatal exposure.

## ***Breastfeeding while taking guanfacine:***

Guanfacine has not been studied in breastfeeding. Since this medication has not been well studied, you might discuss medication options with your healthcare provider to see if there are better-studied medications that could be used to treat your medical condition while breastfeeding. If you suspect that the baby has symptoms (too sleepy, muscle weakness, or low blood pressure), contact the child's healthcare provider. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all of your breastfeeding questions.

## ***If a male takes guanfacine, could it affect fertility (ability to get partner pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects in a partner's pregnancy?***

Studies have not been done to see if guanfacine could affect male fertility or increase the chance of birth defects. In general, exposures that fathers or sperm donors have are unlikely to increase risks to a pregnancy. For more

information, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet Paternal Exposures at:  
<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/paternal-exposures-pregnancy>.

**Please click here for references.**

**Questions? Call 866.626.6847 | Text 855.999.3525 | Email or Chat at [MotherToBaby.org](https://mothertobaby.org).**

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