

## Gastroschisis



### What is gastroschisis?

Gastroschisis (gas-troh-SKEE-sis) is a condition where a baby's intestines stick outside of the baby's body, through a hole beside the belly button. The hole can be small or large and sometimes other organs, such as the stomach and liver, can also stick outside of the baby's body.

### What types of problems occur with gastroschisis?

Immediate concerns are problems regulating the infant's body temperature, dehydration, sepsis, and hypoglycemia. Surgery will be performed as soon as the infant is stable. The survival rate after surgery is 85-90%.

### How common is gastroschisis?

One of every 1,900 babies born in the United States each year have gastroschisis. In Kentucky, one of every 1,600 babies has gastroschisis. White teenage mothers are at a higher risk of having a baby with gastroschisis. Of babies born with gastroschisis, 75% of them are firstborn babies. There is a very rare (4%) chance of having another baby born with gastroschisis.

### What causes gastroschisis?

The cause of most cases of gastroschisis is unknown. It is believed to be associated with environmental (such as alcohol or tobacco use) and genetic factors.

### How is gastroschisis treated?

A surgeon will operate to put the infant's intestines into the abdomen shortly after birth.

### What can I do to prevent gastroschisis?

Women can take steps before and during pregnancy to be healthy, including taking a multivitamin, not smoking, not taking illegal drugs, and not drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

### Where do I go from here?

This is a very stressful time for you. You may not know how to feel. Most parents feel denial, grief, and even anger. It's okay to feel that way and no one will blame you. You haven't done anything wrong, and you're not alone. Soon you will find other people and programs to help you through this. You may want to join a support group. Most importantly, take care of yourself. Be patient with yourself while you're grieving, and remind yourself that things will get better. We've provided some information below to help you.

### Where can I go for more information about gastroschisis?

#### Kentucky Resources

<http://chfs.ky.gov/ccshcn/> KY Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs

[http://mhmr.ky.gov/mhsas/ofl\\_supportgroups.asp](http://mhmr.ky.gov/mhsas/ofl_supportgroups.asp) Kentucky Parent Support Groups

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps> KY First Steps Program (Early Intervention System)

#### National Resources

March of Dimes Foundation [www.modimes.org](http://www.modimes.org) 1-888-MODIMES (1-888-663-4637)

National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities Centers for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd) 1-770-488-7160