

## Successful Chiari Surgery During Pregnancy

Conquer Chiari has reported on several studies recently which in general have shown that women with Chiari are able to safely navigate pregnancy, especially with a care team that is aware of the condition and potential issues. But what happens when someone's Chiari is so bad that surgery can't wait?

A case report from Japan describes a woman in her early 30's who underwent successful decompression surgery during the course of her pregnancy. She first sought treatment after suffering from blurred vision and headaches for six months. The eye doctor recommended an MRI which showed a 27mm herniation and a cervical syrinx. After a neurological exam, she was scheduled for decompression surgery.

However, during a pre-surgical visit, it was discovered that she was five weeks pregnant. Together, the patient her obstetric team and her neurosurgical team decided that the safest course of action would be to perform the decompression surgery during her second trimester of pregnancy. The second trimester is generally recommended for nonpregnancy-related surgeries.

The surgery occurred during her 15<sup>th</sup> week. The fetus showed no signs of distress and there were no surgical complications. Her symptoms and syrinx improved and the rest of her pregnancy was uneventful. In her 38<sup>th</sup> week she spontaneously went into labor and delivered vaginally with no issues to either her or her baby girl.

There are only a couple of reports like this – meaning Chiari surgery during pregnancy – in the medical literature, but all of them resulted in healthy babies and neurological improvement for the mothers.

**Source:** Fukunaga T, Toyota S, Murakami T, et al. A Rare Case of Posterior Fossa Decompression Performed during Pregnancy for Chiari Malformation Type I. NMC Case Rep J. 2025;12:571-575. Published 2025 Dec 18. doi:10.2176/jns-nmc.2025-0223

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Conquer Chiari's research updates highlight and summarize interesting publications from the medical literature while providing background and context. The summaries do contain some medical terminology and assume a general understanding of Chiari. Introductory information and many more research articles can be found in the [Conquer Chiari Library](#).