



AIS



CQUniversity
AUSTRALIA

COMPREHENSIVE CARE CONSIDERATIONS FROM PRECONCEPTION TO PARENTHOOD

Use the below prompts [including discussion topics and critical questions] when establishing a comprehensive care plan for athletes from preconception to parenthood. All plans should be:

Individualised (i.e. tailored specifically to the athlete)

Co-designed (i.e. developed in consultation with the athlete and relevant organisational staff [including performance support experts] and professionals working directly with athletes)

Athlete-centered (i.e. prioritise the needs and wants of athletes)

Flexible (e.g. able to be modified/adjusted as required)

Regularly reviewed (e.g. includes critical time points for review with the athlete to address changes and/or concerns)?

Ongoing (i.e. continued until no longer necessary)

Critical Information to collect

ATHLETE INFORMATION

Name:

Sporting Discipline:

Level of Competition:

Categorisation (e.g. pathway, podium, training partner):

Current stage: planning a family, actively trying to get pregnant, pregnant, postpartum, or parenting (inc. adoption, surrogacy, fostering):

Date the athlete made contact:

Date of discussion:

KEY CONTACTS

Key point of contact within the organisation for all preconception, pregnancy, postpartum and parenthood enquiries:

Person responsible for maintaining communication with athlete during preconception, pregnancy, postpartum and parenthood, including during parental leave:

Athlete, relevant organisational staff (including performance support experts) and professionals working directly with athletes (e.g. coach, sports physician, physiotherapist, dietitian, psychologist, obstetrician, gynaecologist):

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Preferred frequency of contact moving forward (e.g. weekly, monthly):

Preferred method of communication (e.g., face to face, telephone, email):

Who will initiate contact (e.g. athlete or staff member):

Date of next discussion/review of current phase/plan:

Athlete advised to inform organisation/contact person of any significant changes (e.g. confirmed pregnancy, commenced fertility treatment, pregnancy loss, no longer has desire to become pregnant or RTS postpartum):

YES NO NA Comments:

How often would the athlete like to be contacted throughout the different stages (e.g. the athlete wishes to cease all communication with the organisation whilst on parental leave):

Checklist 1: Preconception

EDUCATION / DISCUSSION TOPICS:

How medical and other private and personal information (e.g. athlete expresses intent to start a family in next 12 months) will be managed, stored and shared, and who will have access to what information (e.g. a coach doesn't need to know an athlete has sought information regarding pregnancy or fertility treatment options) to ensure athlete privacy and confidentiality and limit potential bias and discrimination

Organisational support provisions including relevant policies within the organisation (e.g. contract security, grants and/or other financial protections, ranking, categorisation and/or qualification protection, selection and/or re-qualification process, parental leave and carer entitlements, insurance cover, access to training and competition facilities and services including internal and external healthcare professionals, financial subsidies, alternative work arrangements, research opportunities)

Educational resources available (e.g. FPHI pregnancy module and factsheet)

Support groups/networks with other athletes (e.g. other athletes considering a family, utilised fertility treatment services, adoption, fostering)

Age and fertility considerations (e.g. egg quality and quantity declines as age increases, critical timepoints to consider)

Short- and long-term training and competition planning (e.g. when would be a good time to try and get pregnant, take time away from competition)

Menstrual cycle considerations (characteristics of normal menstrual cycle, factors influencing menstrual health, impacts of menstrual abnormalities)

Menstrual cycle tracking practices and tools/apps available

Contraception and hormonal contraception considerations (e.g. timeframe to get pregnant after ceasing contraception, how to manage possible PMS and menstrual cycle if planning to discontinue contraception)

Nutrition (e.g. ensuring energy intake is sufficient to fuel energy output to promote optimal fertility environment)

Fertility treatment options (e.g. IVF, egg freezing)

Sport specific considerations (e.g. rules regarding participant during pregnancy or weight-category/classification sports)

Training considerations (e.g. any modifications to training required)

Fertility supplements (e.g. folate, iron and iodine) and medications (e.g., fertility treatment medications or injections) and WADA compliance considerations

Available fertility screening (e.g. blood tests to determine egg quality and quantity as well as ovulation phase and duration within cycle, and genetic screening to test for potential genetic conditions)

CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AT THIS STAGE

Medical history

Are there medical conditions that may impact conception such as thyroid disorders, hypertension, diabetes, history of disordered eating, REDs, previous pregnancy loss, mental health conditions?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes to above, how are they managed/treated?

Is the athlete up to date with vaccinations, cervical screening and breast examinations?

YES NO NA Comments:

Does the age of the athlete present an increased risk of infertility and/or pregnancy complications?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes to above, how are these risks being managed?

Contraceptive method [e.g. condom, mini pill, implant]:

Menstrual cycle characteristics [e.g. cycle length, period duration, menstrual flow]:

If irregular, refer athlete to performance support expert or professionals for further investigation.

Nutrition:

Has the athlete had their nutrition reviewed to ensure sufficient caloric intake to support a pregnancy and accommodate athlete fuelling requirements?

YES NO NA Comments:

Are referrals required to further support athlete needs [e.g. fertility treatment specialist]?

YES NO NA Comments:

List all medications and supplements:

Do they involve any WADA prohibited substances?

YES NO NA Comments:

Have they been batch tested for potential contamination?

YES NO NA Comments:

Has the athlete applied for a Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Fertility:

Is the athlete planning to engage in fertility treatment?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes to above, detail critical dates and impact on training/competition.

Sport specific considerations [e.g. is the athlete in a weight category/classification sport, are athletes allowed to compete during pregnancy, is there an increased risk of training/competing during pregnancy].

Training and competition considerations:

Athlete short- and long-term training and competition goals [e.g. does the athlete wish to continue to compete during the pregnancy?]:

How long does the athlete intend to continue training?

How, if at all, will training be modified [e.g. reduction in training intensity or volume or high contact activities, such as tackling, during fertility treatment]?

Have goals been reviewed/cleared by relevant health professionals/physician?

YES NO NA Comments:

Ensure goals have been reviewed/cleared by relevant health professionals/physician.

Marketing and promotion:

Does the athlete want to share their fertility journey?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes to above, does the athlete have any stipulations [e.g. all information must be screened by the athlete before being released?]

YES NO NA Comments:

IS THE ATHLETE ACTIVELY TRYING TO GET PREGNANT? ADDITIONAL CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Method [e.g., intercourse, fertility treatment]:

Timeframe [e.g., since ceasing contraception, trying to get pregnant]:

Fertility treatment [if applicable]:

Treatment specialist details/contact information:

Type of treatment [e.g. IVF, egg freezing]:

Significant dates [e.g., egg retrieval and egg implantation]:

Sport specific considerations [e.g., need to miss training or reduced training capacity during fertility treatment]:

Menstrual cycle:

Are PMS symptoms such as bloating, cramping, fatigue, heavy bleeding] being proactively managed (e.g. nutrition, Panadol) to reduce impact on performance?

YES NO NA Comments:

Marketing and promotion:

Does the athlete want to share their fertility journey?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes to above, does the athlete have any stipulations (e.g. all information must be screened by the athlete before being released)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Helpful resource: Are you an athlete considering pregnancy?: <https://www.ais.gov.au/fphi/female-athlete-resources/resources/pregnancy>

Checklist 2: Pregnancy

EDUCATION / DISCUSSION TOPICS:

How medical and other private and personal information (e.g., athlete currently 6 weeks pregnant whilst negotiating contract) will be managed, stored and shared, and who will have access to what information (e.g. legal/contracts team doesn't need to know athlete is currently pregnant) to ensure athlete privacy and confidentiality and limit potential bias and discrimination

Organisational support provisions including relevant policies within the organisation (e.g. contract security, grants and/or other financial protections, ranking, categorisation and/or qualification protection, selection and/or re-qualification process, parental leave and carer entitlements, insurance cover, access to training and competition facilities and services including internal and external healthcare professionals, financial subsidies, alternative work arrangements, research opportunities)

Educational resources available (e.g. FPHI pregnancy module and factsheet)

Support groups/networks with other pregnant and/or postpartum and parenting athletes

Physiological and physical changes to the body, common symptoms, increased nutritional requirements to support pregnancy and accommodate athlete fuelling requirements, foods and supplements to avoid, body image concerns, disordered eating, milk production in late pregnancy

Biopsychosocial considerations (e.g. societal expectations, social and emotional challenges of sport and motherhood including guilt, depression, identity, motivation, stress, anxiety, body image) and strategies to manage and/or overcome challenges

Training and competition (e.g. current guidelines, modified to training/competition during pregnancy, such as ineligibility to compete during pregnancy, removal of contact/collision activities)

CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AT THIS STAGE

Disclosure:

What is the athlete's preferred timeline (e.g. inform coach upon conception, advise support team and teammates at 13 weeks gestation) and method (e.g. private announcements, press release) for disclosure?

Has the athlete experienced any bullying or discrimination since disclosure?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, how is the athlete being supported to manage this?

If yes, has this unacceptable behaviour been appropriately managed and those involved held accountable?

YES NO NA Comments:

Medical considerations:

Has the athlete had a check-up with their treating health professional/s since becoming pregnant?

YES NO NA Comments:

Are there absolute contraindications to exercise during pregnancy [e.g. ruptured membranes, pre-eclampsia]?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, can the athlete continue to train?

YES NO NA Comments:

If no, are there suitable activities the athlete can engage in/take on while unable to train [e.g. assist with coaching]

YES NO NA Comments:

Are there relative contraindications to exercise during pregnancy [e.g. malnutrition, history of miscarriage, type 1 diabetes]?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, do the benefits of competition outweigh potential risks?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, does training need to be modified to account for these relative contraindications?

YES NO NA Comments:

What modifications will be made?

List all pregnancy-specific symptoms [e.g. nausea, fatigue]?

How are they being managed/treated?

Are there any psychological conditions/symptoms [e.g. anxiety, stress, body image concerns]?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, how are these being managed?

Are referrals required to further support athlete needs [e.g. women's health physiotherapist, obstetrician, psychologist]?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, have they been arranged?

YES NO NA Comments:

Pregnancy specific information

OB/GYN/GP contact information:

Gestation age [e.g. how many weeks gestation is the athlete]:

Expected due date (e.g. when is the athlete expected to give birth):

Weight gain (e.g. how much weight has the athlete gained since becoming pregnant):

Nutrition:

Does the athlete require modifications to their diet (e.g. increased caloric intake to support pregnancy and accommodate athlete fuelling requirements, electrolyte supplementation if required)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Are referrals required to further support athlete needs?

YES NO NA Comments:

List all medication and supplements (e.g. anti-nausea medication, folate or iron supplements, laxatives or reflux tablets):

Do they involve any WADA prohibited substances?

YES NO NA Comments:

Have they been batch tested for potential contamination?

YES NO NA Comments:

Has the athlete applied for a Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Training and competition considerations:

Athlete short- and long-term training and competition goals (e.g. does the athlete wish to continue to compete during the pregnancy?):

Are there any sport-specific rules relevant to pregnancy and competing?

YES NO NA Comments:

How long does the athlete plan to continue training?

YES NO NA Comments:

Is there a training plan in place?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, are any of the following changes required to support this plan:

Training intensity, volume, modality, modified exercises/activities?

YES NO NA Comments:

Safe upper limits (training below 90% HR maximum)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Training environment (e.g. athlete should avoid training in excessively hot conditions)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Recovery and/or rehabilitation practices (e.g. ice baths, saunas chambers)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Introduction of pregnancy-specific exercises (e.g. pelvic floor)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Other?

YES NO NA Comments:

Are there pregnancy-related clothing or uniform requirements (e.g. looser clothing, supportive sports bra)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Marketing and promotion:

Does that athlete want to share their pregnancy journey?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, does the athlete have any stipulations (e.g. no birthing details are to be shared)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Helpful resources:

[1] Are you an athlete who is currently pregnant?: <https://www.ais.gov.au/fphi/female-athlete-resources/resources/pregnancy>

[2] Screening tool for physical activity during pregnancy: <https://www.essa.org.au/Web/Web/Resources/Tools-and-templates/Screening-Tool-Physical-Activity-During-Pregnancy.aspx>

Checklist 3: Postpartum

EDUCATION / DISCUSSION TOPICS:

How medical and other private and personal information (e.g. the athlete experienced significant trauma during birth) will be managed, stored and shared, and who will have access to what information (e.g. fellow team members do not need to know personal details) to ensure athlete privacy and confidentiality and limit potential bias and discrimination

Organisational support provisions including relevant policies within the organisation (e.g. contract security, grants and/or other financial protections, ranking, categorisation and/or qualification protection, selection and/or re-qualification process, parental leave and carer entitlements, access to training and recovery facilities and services including internal and external healthcare professionals, financial subsidies, alternative work arrangements)

Educational resources available (e.g. list of helpful resources, training modules)

Support groups/networks with other postpartum and/or parenting athletes

Physical, physiological conditions (e.g. perineal tears, diastasis, pelvic floor dysfunction, hormonal changes) and biopsychosocial considerations (e.g. societal expectations, sleep, support systems, social and emotional challenges of sport and motherhood including guilt, depression, identity, motivation, stress, anxiety, mental health, body image, childcare) and strategies to manage and/or overcome challenges

Breastfeeding (e.g. breastfeeding posture and techniques, nutrition requirements for sport and breastfeeding, mastitis and other breastfeeding conditions, breastfeeding and sport considerations)

Nutrition (e.g. nutrition postpartum, nutrition to support postpartum recovery, breastfeeding, and RTS, the effects of poor nutrition for athletes, newborns, and babies including the signs and symptoms of Low Energy Availability (LEA), Relative Energy Deficiency (REDs), Disordered Eating (DE) behaviours and Eating Disorders (EDs), nutrition for newborns and babies such as introducing solids, and ways to manage nutrition with newborns and babies)

Planning and expectations (e.g. considerations for managing children and family, setting and structuring routines, setting expectations, roles and responsibilities)

Practical and lifestyle challenges of sport and motherhood (e.g. time management, difficulty finding childcare, financial stressors) and strategies to manage and/or overcome such challenges

Training and competition (e.g. current guidelines, rehabilitation, return to training and competition considerations and RTS Frameworks)

CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AT THIS STAGE

Medical history:

Birth outcomes:

Date of birth: Delivery method (e.g. vaginal/caesarean section):

Adverse birthing outcomes (e.g. perineal tearing, episiotomies, instrumental deliveries including forceps or vacuum):

Has the athlete undergone an initial screening by a health professional?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, by who and what was the outcome?

Nutrition:

Does the athlete require modifications to their diet (e.g. increased caloric intake to support breastfeeding and accommodate athlete fuelling requirements)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Are referrals required to further support athlete needs?

YES NO NA Comments:

Is the athlete maintaining regular appointments with relevant health professionals?

YES NO NA Comments:

Training and competition considerations:

Athlete short- and long-term training and competition goals (e.g. is the athlete ready to return to training, does the athlete wish to return to high performance sport in the next 12 months?):

Ensure goals have been reviewed/cleared by relevant health professionals/physician.

Has the athlete undergone necessary screening, risk assessment and clearance by relevant organisational staff to resume training? Refer to Appendix D.

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, were any medical conditions, contradictions or concerns flagged?

YES NO NA Comments:

If no, when will this be scheduled/undertaken?

Is there a training plan in place? If no, refer to Appendix D.

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, are any changes required to accommodate birthing outcomes (e.g. athlete required unplanned caesarean so surgical recovery is priority), biopsychosocial factors (e.g. athlete unable to make scheduled training on a specific day as cannot access childcare) or athlete goals (e.g. athlete wishes to adjust goals for an earlier/later RTS)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Does the training plan consider progression and regression factors and is the athlete aware of these factors?

YES NO NA Comments:

Is there a return to sport plan in place? If no, refer to Appendix D.

YES NO NA Comments:

If challenges remain, does critical individualised support continue once the athlete has returned to sport?

YES NO NA Comments:

Does the athlete have any equipment that will need to be assessed to ensure it's fit for purpose following potential pregnancy and/or postpartum changes?

YES NO NA Comments:

Are there changes to clothing or uniform requirements (e.g. looser clothing, supportive sports bra) as a result of pregnancy and/or postpartum changes?

YES NO NA Comments:

Parental leave:

Does the athlete intend to take parental leave?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, what is their anticipated return date?

Marketing and promotion:

Does that athlete want to share their pregnancy, postpartum or parenthood journey?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, does the athlete have any stipulations (e.g. no images of the athlete's child are to be published without prior permission)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Checklist 4: Non-Birthing Athletes: Adoption, Surrogacy, Fostering

EDUCATION / DISCUSSION TOPICS:

How medical and other private and personal information (e.g. athlete expresses intent to start a family in next 12 months) will be managed, stored and shared and who will have access to what information (e.g. a coach doesn't need to know an athlete has sought information regarding pregnancy or fertility treatment options) to ensure athlete privacy and confidentiality and limit potential bias and discrimination

Organisational support provisions including relevant policies within the organisation (e.g. contract security, grants and/or other financial protections, ranking, categorisation and/or qualification protection, parental leave entitlements, insurance cover, access to training and competition facilities and services including internal and external healthcare professionals, financial subsidies, alternative work arrangements, research opportunities)

Educational resources available (e.g. Domestic and Intercountry Adoption, Australian Government)

Support groups/networks with other athletes (e.g. other athletes considering a family, utilised fertility treatment services, adoption, fostering)

Short- and long-term training and competition planning (e.g. when would be a good time to start a family, take time away from competition)

Nutrition (e.g. ensuring energy intake is sufficient to fuel energy output)

Training considerations (e.g. any modifications to training required)

Legal considerations (e.g. adoption, surrogacy, fostering laws in Australia)

CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AT THIS STAGE

Legal process and timeline:

Has the athlete started the process of adoption?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, when will the adoption occur?

Disclosure:

What is the athlete's preferred timeline (e.g. inform coach about surrogacy, advise support team and team members once surrogacy is finalised) and method (e.g. private announcements, media release) for disclosure?

Has the athlete experienced any bullying or discrimination since disclosure?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, how is the athlete being supported to manage this?

If yes, has this unacceptable behaviour been appropriately managed and those involved held accountable?

YES NO NA Comments:

Medical history:

Are there any medical conditions that may impact parenthood (e.g. REDs, mental health conditions, anxiety, stress, sleep disorders)?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, how are they managed/treated?

Are referrals required to further support athlete needs?

YES NO NA Comments:

Has the athlete had a check-up with their treating health professional/s since becoming a parent?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, does the athlete require any additional treatment/support/referral to additional health professionals?

YES NO NA Comments:

List all medication and supplements:

Do they involve any WADA prohibited substances?

YES NO NA Comments:

Have they been batch tested for potential contamination?

YES NO NA Comments:

Has the athlete applied for a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE)?

YES NO NA Comments:

Nutrition:

Has the athlete had their nutrition reviewed to ensure sufficient caloric intake to support athlete's fuelling requirements for training, competition and parenthood?

YES NO NA Comments:

Is the athlete maintaining regular appointments with relevant health professionals?

YES NO NA Comments:

Training and competition considerations:

Athlete short- and long-term training and competition goals (e.g. does the athlete want to continue to train and/or compete?):

Ensure goals have been reviewed/cleared by relevant health professionals/physician.

Do training and/or competition requirements need to be modified to accommodate biopsychosocial factors [e.g. the athlete is not required to attend 'away games' until complete return to competition to reduce time away from family]?

YES NO NA Comments:

Parental leave:

Does the athlete intend to take parental leave?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, what is their anticipated return date?

Marketing and promotion:

Does that athlete want to share their parenthood journey?

YES NO NA Comments:

If yes, does the athlete have any stipulations [e.g. all information regarding the adoption of a child remain confidential]?

YES NO NA Comments: