

**Recommendation:** To prevent mother-to-child transmission of *Helicobacter pylori*, I propose that *H. pylori* test may be included in prenatal checkups. (This recommendation is directed to obstetricians and pregnant women)  
August 30, 2025     Tsuneo Araki

**Purpose:** The purpose of this recommendation is to prevent mother-to-child transmission of *Helicobacter pylori*, by prenatal checkups, consultation for preventive ways and postpartum eradicating *Helicobacter pylori* from the mother.

**Method:**

- 1) A serum *Helicobacter pylori* antibody titer test is performed during prenatal checkups with her consent. (This can be performed alongside initial blood tests during prenatal checkups, avoiding additional maternal invasiveness. Alternatively, if possible, a fecal *Helicobacter pylori* antigen test is better because it is more reliable.)
- 2) Pregnant women with positive serum *H. pylori* antibody titers will undergo a fecal *H. pylori* antigen test or urea breath test to confirm active infection. (Gastroscopy is not performed during pregnancy due to its invasiveness.)
- 3) Pregnant women confirmed to have active *H. pylori* infection are provided with individualized medical information about *H. pylori*.
- 4) Furthermore, they will be advised to visit a dentist for oral hygiene measures, such as plaque removal.
- 5) *H. pylori* test will be recommended for cohabiting adults. If results are positive, eradication therapy will be performed for the cohabitant. (Refer to the Gastroenterology department)
- 6) Pregnant women with confirmed active *H. pylori* infection will undergo gastroscopy and *H. pylori* culture, along with antibiotic susceptibility test, as soon as possible after delivery (within several months). Eradication therapy will be administered using antibiotics based on the susceptibility results. (Refer to the Gastroenterology department)
- 7) After *H. pylori* eradication therapy, successful eradication should be confirmed after 6 to 8 months with a feces *H. pylori* antigen test or a urea breath test. (Serum *H. pylori* antibody test is not acceptable.)
- 8) If the initial treatment fails, continue with effective drugs to eradicate *H. pylori*. (Certified *H. pylori* infection specialists recognized by the Japanese *Helicobacter* Society are available nationwide; please utilize their services.)
- 9) Until successful eradication is confirmed in the mother, the following two practices must be followed to prevent oral transmission of *H. pylori* to the infant. (Partially similar to measures for preventing dental caries bacterial infection)
  1. Do not feed food or drinks by mouth-to-mouth contact.
  2. Do not share chopsticks, spoons, or straws.
- 10) To check for *H. pylori* infection in infants, a feces *H. pylori* antigen test should be performed at appropriate intervals for at least 2 years. (Even if positive, do not start eradication therapy immediately; wait until age 15. We will coordinate with the pediatrician.)
- 11) Regarding Health Insurance Coverage
  - a) If a gastroscopy has not been performed simultaneously or beforehand, Health insurance does not cover *H. pylori* test, eradication therapy, nor post-eradication test. Therefore, the serum *H. pylori* antibody test (70 points = ¥700) or feces *H. pylori* antigen test (142 points = ¥1,420) during prenatal checkups is not covered by Health insurance and must be paid for out-of-pocket. The same applies to test for cohabiting adults. Children's feces *Helicobacter pylori* antigen tests are also self-pay.

b) By endoscopy of positive individuals, *Helicobacter pylori*-associated gastritis is invariably found. Therefore, Health insurance coverage applies all tests, including the endoscopy.

c) Furthermore, *Helicobacter pylori* culture from two biopsy sites and antibiotic susceptibility test for five types of antibiotics (AMPC, CAM, MNZ, MINO, STFX) are also covered by Health insurance.

Of course, eradication therapy based on susceptibility test (Individual Prescription) is also covered by Health insurance. (The susceptibility test results must be noted on the medical reimbursement bill)

THE END