



Looking to the Future

Someday, there may be a cure or a better way to manage PKU, but for now, maintaining a Phe restricted diet is the only way to treat PKU. Not following the diet may cause mental and nervous system damage at any age, and so should be followed throughout the life. For women who have PKU, there is a strong possibility of damage to an unborn child if she is not on the diet during pregnancy. Women with PKU who wish to become pregnant must strictly follow the diet to prevent mental retardation and birth defects in their children.

All children born to a woman with PKU will either have PKU or be a carrier. Parents who are both carriers of PKU have a 25% chance of having a baby with PKU *with each pregnancy*. Before a couple who has a child with PKU has any more children, they should take time to seriously think about the special parenting tasks that parents of a child with PKU must manage. After taking time to think about the impact on your family, if you decide to have another child, give yourselves time to adjust to the special needs of the first child. Make sure that you have learned diet management for your child with PKU before having another child.

