

Pregnancy – Early Stages

What To Expect When You ARE Expecting



Am I pregnant? What should I be eating? Is it normal to be this tired? Where do I give birth? These are all questions newly pregnant and first time mums need answering.

In this pack we have tried to cover all the queries you might have when you first find out that you are expecting a baby and are planning to continue with the pregnancy.

However, if this pregnancy is not such happy news, please know that we are also here to provide advice and guidance to help you access the care and support you need to make the right choice for you. Just ask at reception.

Am I pregnant?

If you've not done a test yet but you suspect you could be pregnant, here are the signs that could give the game away...

- changes of appetite
- feeling of [sickness, nausea and vomiting](#)
- strange taste in your mouth
- constipation
- needing to wee more often
- headaches
- breast changes
- tiredness
- mood swings
- spotting / cramps

What should I be eating? See the table below

GOOD TO EAT	AVOID WHILST PREGNANT
Fruit and Vegetables	Swordfish/Marlin/Shark – high mercury levels
Wholegrains/Pulses/ Beans/Lentils	Soft Cheese made from unpasteurised milk Brie/Taleggio/Cambembert/Gorgonzola/ Danish Blue/Dolcelatte
Lean Meats	Undercooked Eggs
Oily Fish - Mackerel/Salmon/Sardines/Anchovies/Trout <u>TWICE A WEEK MAXIMUM</u>	No more than 200mg caffeine daily – maybe switch to decaf? Caffeine free soft drinks
OMEGA-3 – Nuts/Green leafy vegetables/Eggs/Chia Seeds/Rapeseed Oil	Cured and undercooked meats
Plenty of water (but you will be running to toilet more often, especially later in the pregnancy)	Liver/Haggis/Pate – high levels of Vitamin A

Is it normal to be this tired?

Growing a baby is hard work, especially in the early stages and can be quite exhausting.

As well as increasing your intake of leafy green vegetables, supplements, such as Folic Acid are highly recommended to boost iron levels and help with the symptoms of tiredness and fatigue that all expectant mothers feel.

400mcg Folic Acid once daily for the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, 10mcg Vitamin D daily and a Multivitamin tablet daily are all encouraged, to help promote a health pregnancy in both mother and child.

Is it safe to drink alcohol when you are pregnant?

The Chief Medical Officers for the UK recommend that if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, the safest approach is not to drink alcohol at all to keep risks to your baby to a minimum

Drinking in pregnancy can lead to long term harm to the baby, with the more you drink, the greater the risk.

Please ask your midwife what the current guidelines are, especially if alcohol is a problem.

What is antenatal care?

This is the care you receive while you're pregnant to make sure you and your baby are as well as possible.

In most cases, you will meet with **your midwife** 8 -12 weeks into the pregnancy.

Your midwife is the healthcare professional who will give you all the advice and information you need going forward.

The midwife providing your antenatal care will:

- check the health of you and your baby
- give you useful information to help you have a healthy pregnancy, including advice about healthy eating and exercise
- discuss your options and choices for your care during pregnancy, labour and birth
- answer any questions you may have
- All mums-to-be in England are offered:
 - 2 pregnancy ultrasound scans at 8 to 14 weeks and 18 to 21 weeks
 - antenatal screening tests to find out the chance of your baby having certain conditions, such as Down's syndrome
 - blood tests to check for syphilis, HIV and hepatitis B
 - screening for sickle cell and thalassaemia

You may also be offered antenatal classes, including breastfeeding workshops, conversation classes if English is not your first language. Ask your midwife about classes in your area.

Starting antenatal care

You can book directly with your midwife as soon as you find out you're pregnant, and it is best to make contact with a midwife as early as possible, to get the information you need about having a healthy pregnancy.

Some screening tests, if necessary, may need to be done before you're 10 weeks pregnant.

If you have special health needs, your midwife may take shared responsibility for your maternity care alongside your GP - this means they will both be involved in your care during pregnancy

Let your midwife know if you have a disability that means you have special requirements for your antenatal appointments or for labour.

If you do not speak English, tell your midwife, so that interpreting services can be arranged

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You can call **South Woodford Health Centre** on 0300 300 1655 to speak to our local midwifery team. Your nearest Children's Centre can also put you in touch with your local midwifery service.

For **WOODFORD** – the main Childrens Centre is based at:

Orchard Children's Centre, Liston Way, Woodford, Essex, IG8 7BL and is open Monday – Friday, 09.00 – 17.00

For **WANSTEAD** – the main Childrens Centre is

Aldersbrook Children's Centre, Ingatestone Road, Wanstead, London, E12 5HE and is open Monday – Friday, 08.30 – 12.00

How many antenatal appointments will I have?

If you're expecting your first child, you'll have up to 10 antenatal appointments.

If you have had a baby before, you'll have around 7 appointments, but sometimes you may have more – for example, if you develop a medical condition.

Early in your pregnancy, your midwife or doctor will give you written information about how many appointments you're likely to have and when they'll happen.

You should have a chance to discuss the schedule of antenatal appointments with them.

If you cannot keep an appointment, let the clinic or midwife know and make another one.

Where will I have my antenatal appointments?

Your appointments can take place at a variety of places, depending on your midwife's schedule, for example;

- your home
- a Children's Centre
- a GP surgery (not always your own GP surgery)
- a hospital

You will usually go to the hospital for your pregnancy scans.

Antenatal appointments should take place in a setting where you feel able to discuss sensitive issues, such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, mental illness or drugs.

To make sure you get the best pregnancy care, your midwife will ask you many questions about you and your family's health, and your preferences.

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Your midwife will carry out some checks and tests, some of which will be done periodically throughout your pregnancy, such as urine tests and blood pressure checks.

The results may affect your choices later in pregnancy, so it's important not to miss them.

Your midwife will also ask about any other social care support you may have or need, such as support from social workers or family liaison officers.

Questions you might be asked

The midwife or doctor might ask about:

- the date of the first day of your last period
- your health
- any previous illnesses and operations you have had
- any previous pregnancies and miscarriages
- the ethnic origins of you and your partner to find out whether your baby may be at risk of certain inherited conditions, or other relevant factors, such as whether your family has a history of twins
- your job, your partner's job and what kind of accommodation you live in to see whether your circumstances might affect your pregnancy
- how you're feeling and whether you have been depressed

Your antenatal appointments are an opportunity to tell your midwife or doctor if you're in a vulnerable situation or if you need extra support.

Where do I give birth?

You can choose to have your baby in

- A hospital
- A birthing centre
- At home

If you already know which hospital you want to give birth in locally, you can self-refer to Maternity Services by going online at <https://bartshealth.nhs.uk/maternity> (see page 6)

Otherwise, your midwife and local NCT groups can give you information about the closest birthing centres to you and what is needed and involved in an at home delivery, so that you can make an informed decision as to what would work best for you and your family.

If this pregnancy is happy news for you, from all the team here at Glebelands we wish you **“GOOD LUCK”** over the coming months, and look forward to meeting our new patient.

For Self Referral Online, go to

<https://www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/maternity>

Scroll down to “Your Appointments”.

This is what you will see.

Making your first appointment - how to be referred

By clicking on the link for the hospital of your choice, you will access their online referral form, fill it in and email it directly to them

When you first find out that you are pregnant you should register for antenatal care as soon as possible. This enables us to organise maternity care for you that takes into account all your needs and preferences.

To be referred to a hospital within Barts Health maternity services. You can completing the online form for the hospital of your choice – click below

- [Royal London Hospital Referral Form](#)
- [Newham Hospital Referral Form](#)
- [Barking Birth Centre - For non-urgent enquiries, you can call 020 8252 8281.](#)
- [Whipps Cross Referral Form](#)

Once your referral has been received a booking appointment with a midwife will be sent out to you and ideally be completed before the week 10 of your pregnancy.

At this appointment your individual plan of care will be discussed with you and plans made for your future appointments.

If you have booked to have your baby at another unit but wish to transfer your care to us, please complete the self-referral form above. We will do our best to see you within two weeks of receiving your form.

The Trust offers an interpreting service, Bilingual Health Advocacy Service which includes face-to-face interpreting and also telephone line interpreting. For more information visit the interpreting service pages of our website here.

If English is not your first language and you require this service then this should be included on the referral form and an interpreter will be arranged for your appointment. We prefer not to use any friends or family members to interpret for you.

If you have any problems or queries doing this, contact us at reception on 020 8989 6272