London Ambulance Service
NHS Trust

Pregnancy Care Advice

This leaflet is for people who are pregnant or think they might be pregnant. We hope you have a straightforward pregnancy journey but if you need advice, this leaflet explains who to contact.

If you think you are pregnant

- Sexual health clinics and some GP surgeries provide free pregnancy tests if required.
- You are encouraged to do your own pregnancy tests, you can get them from the pharmacy or supermarket.
- If the test is positive contact your GP surgery or self-refer for maternity care online via your local hospital website.
- If you are not registered at a GP surgery, you can call 111 for advice.
- They will estimate how many weeks pregnant you are and will discuss the next steps and options for your pregnancy.
- A booking appointment with a midwife should be arranged by 10 weeks of pregnancy. Your midwife will discuss the next steps and provide health advice for you and your baby. Speak to your GP or pharmacist before making any changes to prescribed medications you are taking.

Nausea and vomiting

This is very common in early pregnancy but can sometimes continue in later pregnancy. Speak to your GP or call 111 if you have any of the following:

- Dark urine or have not been able to pass urine in more than 8 hours
- You are unable to keep food or fluids down for 24 hours or more
- You feel weak, dizzy or faint standing up
- You have tummy pain
- You have a high temperature
- You are vomiting blood
- You have lost weight

Call 999:

If you experience:

- Slurred speech or confusion
- Severe breathlessness
- Skin mottled/discoloured

This leaflet must NOT replace your own maternity notes given to you by the hospital or midwife.

All pregnant women and people can access NHS maternity services. Accessing healthcare early is very important to avoid any complications for you or your baby. Maternity care is considered urgent and necessary so it will never be refused.

Pregnancy concerns

Vaginal bleeding

Before 12 weeks

Call your GP or 111 if you have any of the following:

- Tummy pain on one side
- Vaginal bleeding
- Brown, watery discharge
- Pain in the tip of your shoulder
- Discomfort when peeing or pooing.

After 12 weeks

If you have any kind of bleeding or spotting after 12 weeks, contact the hospital maternity unit immediately for advice.

Call 999:

If the bleeding is heavy (soaking through a sanitary pad in less than an hour) or there are signs you have lost a lot of blood: rapid heart rate, breathing problems, dizziness or fainting.

Depending on where you live, certain maternity units may signpost you to a different service depending on how many weeks pregnant you are.

Feeling out of breath

Shortness of breath starts gradually in early pregnancy or the second trimester. It should not be painful or come on suddenly. You shouldn't have other symptoms, such as wheezing or a cough. If you are concerned about your breathing during your pregnancy you should speak to your GP, midwife or 111.

Call 999 or go to A&E:

If you feel breathless with any of the following:

- Feeling faint, dizzy or pass out
- Have chest pain
- Heart beating fast or feels abnormal
- Swelling to one leg
- You feel like you are gasping for air and it is hard to breathe

Headaches

Before 20 weeks

Call your GP or 111 if you have a persistent headache not relieved by paracetamol, visual disturbances, double vision or a high temperature of 38°C or over.

After 20 weeks

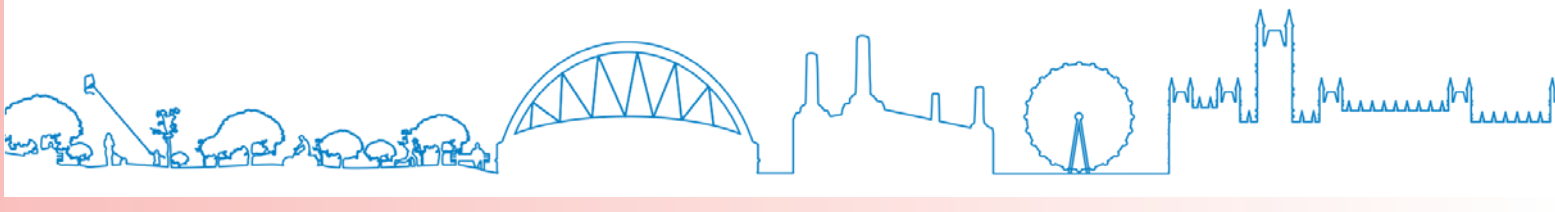
You must contact the local maternity unit if you have any of the following:

- Persistent headache not relieved by paracetamol
- Changes to your vision (blurred vision or flashing lights)
- Severe pain just below your ribs on the right side
- Vomiting
- Heartburn that doesn't go away with antacid medicines
- Rapidly increasing swelling to the face, hands or feet
- Feeling very unwell.

Call 999:

If you:

- Have a seizure
- Are unable to speak
- Have sudden onset of worst headache ever
- Suffer loss of consciousness
- Are confused or not alert



and when to call?

Baby movements

Most people usually begin to feel their baby move between 16-24 weeks of pregnancy. Your baby should move more and more up until 32 weeks then the movements will stay roughly the same until you give birth.

- If you have **NOT** felt your baby move by 24 weeks you must contact your midwife or local maternity unit
- From 24 weeks, if you are concerned you have not felt your baby move, or movements have stopped, reduced or changed, you must contact your local maternity unit immediately.

It is **NOT TRUE** some babies move less nearer the end of pregnancy. You should feel regular movements up until you deliver your baby.

DO NOT WAIT:

Until the next day to seek advice if you are worried about your baby's movements.

Signs of labour

Call your maternity unit straight away if:

- Your waters break (you may feel a pop and a gush, or the waters may leak slowly)
- You are having 3 or more contractions every 10 minutes
- You are unsure whether you are in labour, they will talk through your symptoms
- You have any vaginal bleeding, your waters break and the colour is green or brown
- Before 37 weeks, you have any signs of labour even if the pain is mild.

Call 999:

If:

- You think baby is coming and you have a strong urge to push
- You can see part of your baby or the umbilical cord coming from your vagina
- There is any heavy bleeding

Other concerns

Mental Health

Having a baby can be a happy and exciting time in your life but lots of people can feel anxious and worried.

Speak to your GP, midwife or health visitor if you feel you need help with your mental health. They can also refer you to local support and advocacy groups.

If you need help right now:

Call 111 or
116 123 (Samaritans)

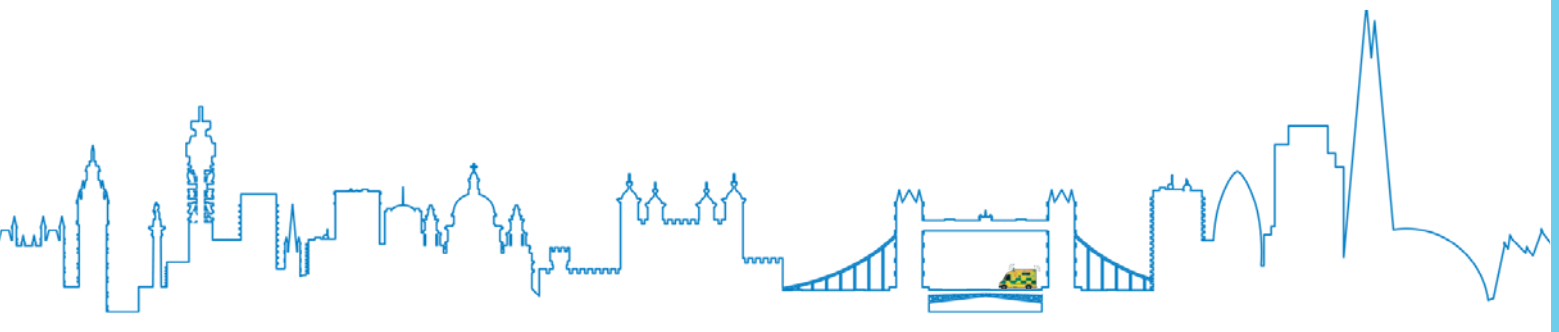
Call 999 or go to A&E:

If you have:

- Any thoughts to harm yourself or anyone else
- Hallucinations or delusions

Backache

Speak to your midwife if you have backache or pain in your hips not relieved by paracetamol.



The space below is for you to add information about your pregnancy, as it may be useful for any healthcare professionals who care for you during or shortly after pregnancy.

Estimate due date	
Previous live births	
Any previous pregnancy loss (number)	
Pregnancy complications (current and previous pregnancies	
Maternity triage number / Midwife number	
Date information completed:	

Post Pregnancy – When to be concerned

You will have some bleeding from your vagina for a few weeks post birth. Speak to your GP, midwife or call 111 if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Persistent headache, swelling or visual disturbances
- High temperature / flu like symptoms
- Diarrhoea / vomiting
- Tummy pain that gets worse
- Vaginal bleeding smells, gets heavier, or you are passing blood in clumps or clots
- You are still bleeding after 6 weeks
- Offensive discharge from any stitches on your perineum or abdomen
- Pain, swelling or redness to one leg
- Severe backache not relieved by paracetamol
- Pain or redness in your breasts

Your midwife will arrange regular check ups for you and your baby.

All births must be registered within 42 days at the local register office. You also need to register your baby at the GP surgery.

Call 999 or go to your local A&E:

If you have any of the following symptoms post birth:

- Bleeding is very heavy from your vagina, and you feel dizzy or faint
- Pain in your chest or you have severe breathing problems
- Having a seizure, slurred speech, confusion, weakness in arms/legs
- Sudden severe headache, loss of vision or double vision

BABY

Call 999:

If your baby has any of the following symptoms:

- Breathing difficulties or baby has stopped breathing
- Making grunting noises or pauses when breathing
- Turning blue, purple or black
- Unresponsiveness or floppy
- Rash that does not go away with pressure
- Any seizure or fit
- Extreme lethargy
- If you are extremely worried something is wrong with them.

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