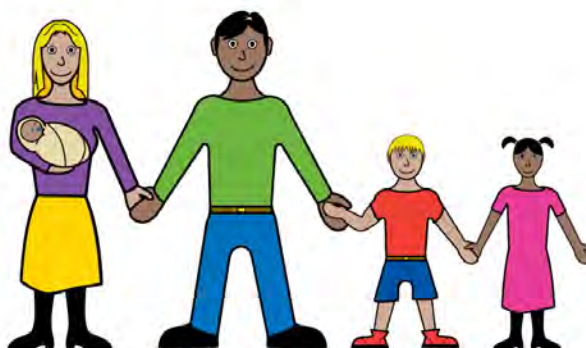




# Your Choices

Before, during and after pregnancy  
This is a guide to help you choose  
what is right for you.

## Easy Read version.



This booklet contains links to useful websites. You can click on them to get more information online.

# Making choices about your care

This booklet will help you to talk to your doctor or midwife about the choices you can make for your pregnancy and your baby's birth.

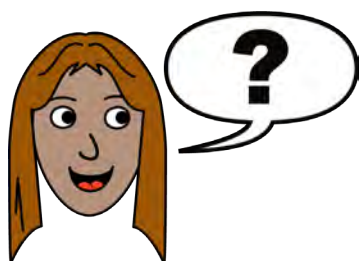


Your doctor or midwife will help you to make choices about your care.

You can change your mind at any time and make a different decision.

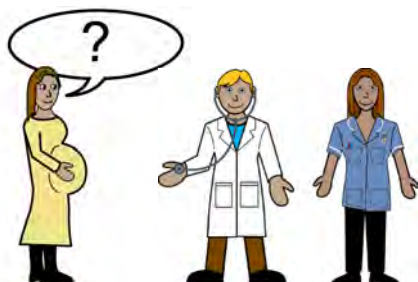


Consent is being asked if you agree to something. You can say yes or no.



You can ask your doctor or midwife to tell you:

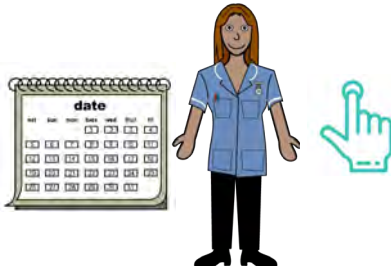
- Why you or your baby needs care or treatment.
- What might happen when you or your baby has care or treatment.



You can ask your doctor or midwife to help you to make decisions about your care.

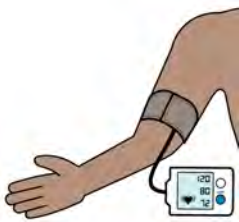
# What to expect during your pregnancy

During your pregnancy you will have regular antenatal (pregnancy) appointments with your midwife or doctor. They will check you and your baby are well.



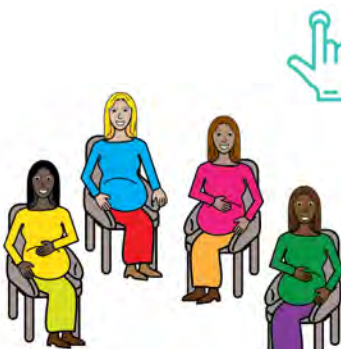
## Booking a midwife appointment

When you find out you are pregnant you can book an appointment to see your midwife.



## Regular midwife appointments

You will have appointments with your midwife every 4-6 weeks. Your midwife will check how you are. They will take your blood pressure and take a wee sample.



## Preparing for your baby's birth

You can join free classes to learn about becoming a parent. There are lots of ideas to help you and your family.

You can go to free antenatal classes with your midwife. You can join free online classes about becoming a parent called **Pathway to Parenting**.

Speak to your midwife to get booked in.

# What to expect during your pregnancy

This page explains when you can expect to have appointments during your pregnancy. Your pregnancy will usually last between 37-41 weeks.



## Your first midwife appointment at 7-10 weeks pregnant

Your midwife will talk about tests you can have to help keep you safe.



## At 12 weeks pregnant

You can have a scan to check your baby is OK. You can choose to have a blood test to see if your baby is healthy. Your midwife will talk to you about what this means.



## At 18-21 weeks pregnant

You can have a scan to check your baby is growing normally. The scan can tell you if there is a problem with your baby before they are born. You can choose if you want the scan.



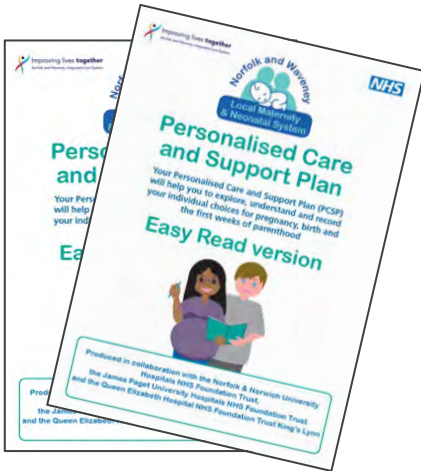
## At 41 weeks pregnant

Your midwife will talk to you about what they can do to help get labour started. You can talk to your midwife about things that matter to you.

# Your care and how we work together



Your midwife will give you a [Personal Care and Support Plan](#) (PCSP) at your first appointment.



We will use the personalised care and support plan to help you make informed choices by...



Writing down what is important to you and your family.



Updating your choices during your pregnancy.



Talking about what you want to happen when you give birth. This is called your birth plan.



Planning what is important to you after your baby comes.

# Top tips when you are pregnant



**Book to see the midwife as soon as possible when you find out you are pregnant.**



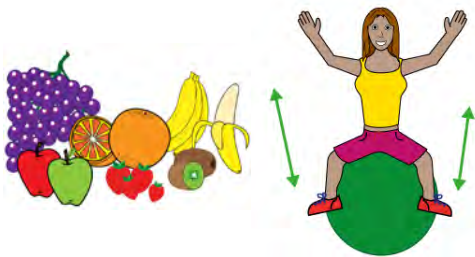
**Start taking 400 mcg folic acid every day. This helps your baby's spinal cord grow well.**



**Don't drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes, they are harmful to you and your baby's health.**



**Start taking 10 mcg vitamin D every day. This helps your baby's bones, teeth, heart and kidneys grow strong.**



**Eat healthy food and do regular, gentle exercise.**



**Talk to your midwife or someone you trust about your feelings and any worries.**

For more information you can visit:



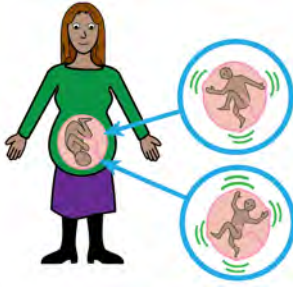
[Just One Norfolk](#)



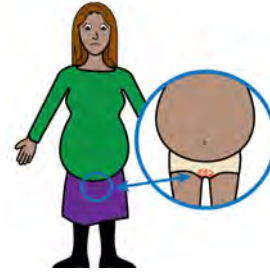
[Suffolk pregnancy guidance](#)



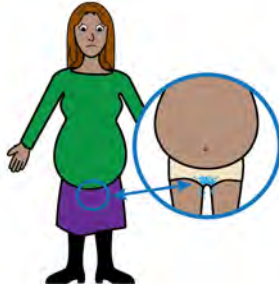
# When to ask your midwife for help



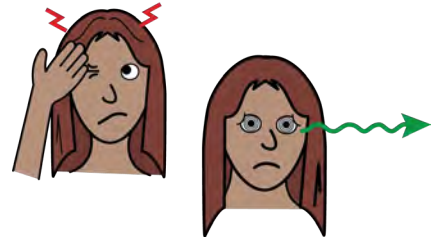
Your baby's movements have slowed down or changed.



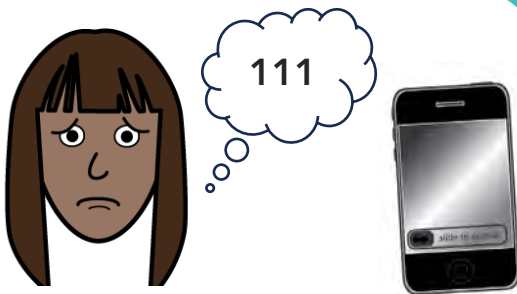
Bleeding from your vagina.



Discharge in your knickers that is not normal



Signs of pre-eclampsia - a bad headache, sickness, problems with sight and bad tummy pain.



If you are worried call your maternity unit or call 111.



Call 999 if it is an emergency.

For more information you can visit:



[Just One Norfolk](#)



[Suffolk pregnancy guidance](#)

# Choices about where to give birth



Your midwife or doctor will give you advice about where you can choose to have your baby.

You can choose where to give birth:



**At a midwifery-led birthing unit** where you get care from midwives.



**At a hospital delivery suite** where you get care from midwives and doctors.



**At home** where you get care from midwives.

In Norfolk and Waveney, the maternity-led birthing units and hospital delivery suites are at:



**Norfolk and Norwich Hospital** in Norwich.



**Queen Elizabeth Hospital** in King's Lynn.



**James Paget Hospital** in Great Yarmouth.



Your midwife or doctor will support you to give birth in the place you choose.

If there are any health worries or difficulties with you or your baby, this may need to change. Your midwife or doctor will give you advice.



# Home birth and your choices



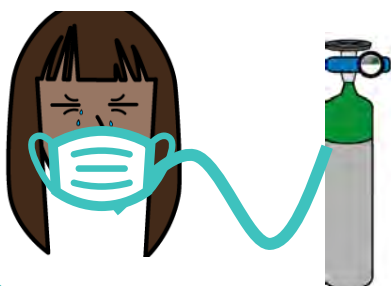
If you and your baby are healthy then you can choose to have your baby at home. Your doctor or midwife will help you make the best decision for you and your baby.



If you choose to have your baby at home, midwives will care for you.



Being at home can help you feel relaxed. Your partner and family can stay with you.



You can choose to have gas and air to help make your birth less painful. You breathe the gas and air through a tube. It helps you to relax.



If you have a problems in labour, you will need to go to hospital. Your midwife will help you.

# Midwifery-led birthing unit and your choices



If you and your baby are healthy then you can choose to have your baby at a midwifery-led birthing unit (MLBU). Your doctor or midwife will help you make the best decision for you and your baby.



A midwifery-led birthing unit is run by midwives and is usually homely, calm and relaxing.



Birthing pools can be used. Being in water helps you to relax and is calming.



There are different types of pain relief you can try.



If you have problems in labour, you may need to go to hospital.

Your midwife will help you.

# Hospital delivery suite and your choices



In a hospital delivery suite, you will be cared for by midwives and doctors. Having your baby in the hospital might be the best option for you if:



If you or your baby has a health need which means you need more support from doctors and midwives.



If you know your baby will need special care right away.



If you are planning a caesarean birth or think it may happen.

A caesarean birth is an operation to deliver your baby through a cut made in your tummy and womb.

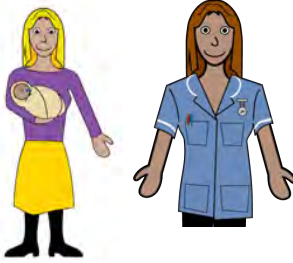


If you would like an epidural to stop the pain.

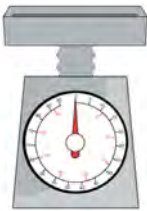
An epidural is when medicine goes through a thin tube into your back. This blocks the feeling of pain.

# After your baby is born

Here is some information about your care after your baby is born.



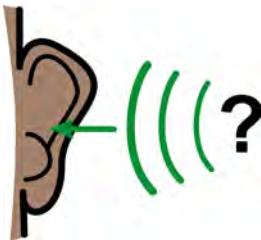
In the first five days after your baby is born, your midwife will check you and your baby are healthy and well. This can be at home or at a clinic.



Your midwife will weigh your baby.



Your midwife will offer your baby a blood spot test. This is done by pricking your baby's heel.



Your midwife will offer your baby a hearing test.



Your midwife will remove stitches if you were given some when you gave birth to your baby.

# After your baby is born

Here is some information about your care after your baby is born.



Spend time holding your naked baby against your skin. You can cover your baby with a blanket to keep it warm.

This helps you bond with your baby and helps breastfeeding.



It is important to make sure your baby is sleeping in a safe way:

- in their cot
- lying on their back
- in the same room as you



Breastfeeding helps you and your baby's health.

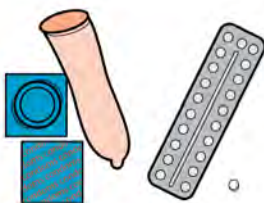
Your midwife, health visitor and support groups can help with breastfeeding.



Babies crying can be hard to deal with.

Always handle your baby with care.

It is OK to take a break when you need to.



When you are ready to have sex again, use contraception if you do not want to get pregnant.

You can get pregnant again right away after your baby is born.

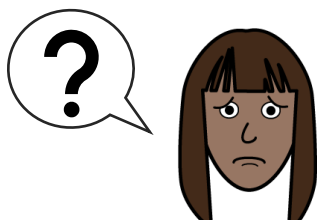


# Talking about your pregnancy and birth

After your baby is born you might find it useful to talk to someone about your pregnancy or birth.



Your labour or birth might have been difficult. Something unexpected might have happened.

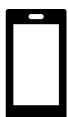


After you have had your baby, it is normal to feel lots of emotions. You might feel tearful and sad.



You can talk to a midwife, doctor or health visitor about your pregnancy or birth. They can get you help if you need it.

You can contact the Birth Reflections service at your hospital:



Norfolk and Norwich  
Hospital  
01603 287334



James Paget  
Hospital  
[birthafterthoughts@  
jpaget.nhs.uk](mailto:birthafterthoughts@jpaget.nhs.uk)



Queen Elizabeth  
Hospital  
Access via your  
maternity app.

# Useful information

You can find lots more useful information about your pregnancy, your health and giving birth.



[Just One Norfolk website](#) and the  
Just One Number 0300 300 0123



[Suffolk pregnancy guidance](#)



[NHS pregnancy guide](#)

Family Hubs can provide information and advice to families.



[Norfolk Family Hubs](#)



[Suffolk Family Hubs](#)

Translation and accessible options are available on all these websites.

You can click on the "translate" option. Or the  symbol at the top of the page.



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Norfolk & Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust,  
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and our Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships.

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