



Hoping to Become Pregnant?

There are many ways you can help prepare your body and mind for the best chances of getting pregnant and having a healthy pregnancy and baby. Starting Well is here to help support you to make healthy choices. This leaflet contains information on some things you can think about before getting pregnant.

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Pregnancy

The Starting Well Team Can Help You:

- ✓ Get dads and partners Involved in making healthy choices
- ✓ Look after your wellbeing before you get pregnant
- ✓ Find out about any hereditary conditions in your family
- ✓ Achieve a healthy weight before being pregnant
- ✓ Give advice about registering with a GP and things to check with them
- ✓ Address any mental health concerns
- ✓ Get access to Folic Acid and Vitamin D
- ✓ Get help to quit smoking and cut alcohol intake
- ✓ Give confidential advice and help to manage addictions





✓ Dads and Partners

There's lots of information for future mums and birthing parents about starting a family. But there are also things dads and partners can do to increase their partner's chance of getting pregnant. This includes looking after their own and their partner's physical and mental health as well as starting to think about how having a baby will impact on finances or childcare for existing children. Starting Well is here for dads as well as mums and can provide lots of support for all members of the family.

✓ Look After Your Wellbeing

Look after your wellbeing to give yourself the best chance of having a healthy pregnancy. Wellbeing can be everything from our mental health, diet, exercise to how we manage our finances or our relationships. The Starting Well Team of social prescribers can help you make positive changes to your life to give you the best chance of a healthy pregnancy.

✓ Genetic Testing and Screening

You and your partner should try and find out about health conditions that run in the family. start to think about any health conditions you or anyone in your family have that may impact on your unborn child. The Starting Well team can advise you about what type of conditions you need to find out about or you can speak to your doctor about genetic testing and planning for pregnancy.

✓ Think about your body weight

Did you know that being under or overweight affect your chance of getting pregnant? Your weight prior to becoming pregnant can also affect the health of your unborn baby. You can check your body weight against the BMI calculator at www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator. The Starting Well team can help you with tips on creating affordable and healthy meals and getting exercise and living an active lifestyle.

✓ Take Folic Acid & Vitamin D

Start taking Folic Acid at least 12 weeks before you plan on getting pregnant or as soon as possible after pregnancy. Folic Acid can help prevent birth defects such as neural tube defects. The dose for Folic Acid is 400mcg however you may need a higher dose of 5mg if you have diabetes, epilepsy, a family history of neural tube defects or you are overweight. The recommended dose for vitamin D is 10 micrograms (400 international units) for all pregnant women and you should start taking this at the same time you take Folic Acid. Some women can get Folic Acid and Vitamin D by prescription. The Starting Well Team can help you find affordable access to supplements.



✓ Get Help to Quit Smoking

It is best for you and your partner and anyone you live with to try and stop smoking. Smoking and passive smoking can reduce your chance of getting pregnant and cause health problems to you and your baby. The Starting Well Team can help you access support to help you give up smoking as well as access smoking cessation support via the NHS.



✓ Cut Out Alcohol and Drugs

It is best to try and stop drinking any alcohol and stop taking recreational drugs. This is because they can damage your health and can reduce your chances of getting pregnant and affect the health of your baby during pregnancy. The Starting Well Team can help you access support to help you give up drinking or taking recreational drugs.

✓ Get Help with Addictions

We understand that if you have an addiction to smoking, alcohol or drugs, it can be very difficult to stop. There are lots of ways you can get help to manage your addiction to get the best possible outcomes for your pregnancy. The Team at Starting Well can provide confidential support and help you access addiction services.

✓ Think About Your Mental Health

If you have had a mental illness in the last 5 years it is a good idea to speak to a health professional to make sure you are in the best possible health to have a child. If you are on medication to treat mental health conditions, you should let your doctor know you would like to become pregnant because some medications can impact on your ability to get pregnant or affect the health of your unborn child. The Starting Well Team of social prescribers can help you access one to one mental health support.

"The Starting Well team are here to help you take steps to a healthy body and healthy mind."

✓ Speak to a medical professional

Make sure you let your GP Practice know that you would like to become pregnant. Some medications can cause complications in pregnancy and healthcare professionals and pharmacists can provide you with the most up to date advice.

Your GP can also make sure you are up to date with immunisations and screenings and help you manage chronic health conditions (such as diabetes).

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The Team at Starting Well Can Help You. Get In Touch With Us:



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Creating Better Lives

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