

Medication

Some medications that you are taking may not be safe to take during pregnancy. We will be able to recommend alternative treatments that are appropriate.

Folic acid supplements

All women should take folic acid supplements before conceiving and during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy to reduce risks of having a baby with a neural tube defect. You should be prescribed Folic Acid 5mg. This dose is for people with diabetes as there is a greater risk of occurrence than in the general population.

Your weight and diet

You will benefit from keeping your weight in the correct weight range for your height. It is also important to eat healthily. You will be offered an appointment with a dietitian to discuss your needs.

Immune status

You may have had a rubella vaccination at some time; we would recommend having a blood test to check that you are immune.

Alcohol consumption

It is advisable not to consume alcohol when trying to conceive and in the first 3 months of pregnancy as it can increase your risk of miscarriage. If it is not possible for you to cut out alcohol completely then try to consume no more than 1-2 units of alcohol, once or twice a week.

Smoking

You should not smoke during pregnancy. If you are a passive smoker (this means that you live with someone that smokes), try to find a way to reduce the amount of smoke that you inhale at home.

NHS Pregnancy Smoking Helpline

0800 169 9 169

What if I think I am pregnant and I did not plan it?

- Contact your GP as soon as possible.
- Check that your current treatment is safe to take during early pregnancy.
- Arrange an appointment with the hospital ante-natal team within 1 – 2 weeks.
- Start taking Folic acid 5mg daily.
- Start monitoring your blood glucose levels at least four times daily. This will help your diabetes treatment to be altered according to the changes that take place during pregnancy.

Colchester Hospital University **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

More information available from:

www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/pdf/CG063PublicInfo.pdf

[www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/ Living_with_diabetes/Pregnancy_and_diabetes/](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/Living_with_diabetes/Pregnancy_and_diabetes/)

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Minimising risks associated with Diabetes in Pregnancy



NHS

North East Essex

How often is pregnancy associated with diabetes?

Approximately 600,000 women give birth in England and Wales each year and statistics show that between 2 and 5% of pregnancies involve women with diabetes. This means that for every 100 pregnancies, 2 to 5 women will have diabetes.

Some of these women may not know that they have diabetes until the later stages of their pregnancy. Gestational diabetes is the name given to diabetes that starts during a pregnancy but resolves after pregnancy.

Risks associated with pregnancy and diabetes

Among pregnancies that are complicated by diabetes, 35% of cases involve preexisting diabetes (either Type 1 or Type 2) and two thirds (65%) involve gestational diabetes.

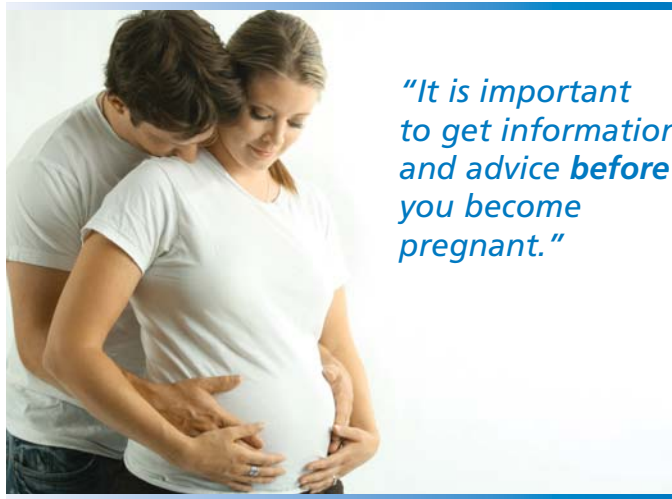
Diabetes during pregnancy is a very manageable condition. With correct and careful monitoring, your baby will be perfectly healthy and a normal birth is possible, however there are significant risks if you do not seek medical advice:-

- Unmanaged diabetes can increase the risk of you losing your baby or having a baby with abnormalities.
- High blood pressure (pre-eclampsia) and having a large baby and pre-term labour are associated with poorly controlled diabetes.
- Diabetic retinopathy (progressive damage to the eyes caused by long term diabetes) can degrade rapidly during pregnancy.

Advantages of planning a family

The unborn baby can be especially vulnerable during the first two months of pregnancy (day 17 – 56 post conception). At this time many women are still unaware that they are pregnant. It is important to get information and advice **before** you become pregnant. Ideally, if you are considering having a baby within the next 12 months, you should make an appointment as early as possible to be seen by the Diabetes team.

Do not wait until you are pregnant before seeking advice. The best outcomes for mothers and their babies can be achieved with a little forward planning.



*“It is important to get information and advice **before** you become pregnant.”*

Contact the Diabetes Team at Colchester General Hospital on

Helpline

01206 742076

Secretary

01206 742394

By addressing risk factors before conception, couples can have the maximum opportunity to optimise their chances of an uncomplicated pregnancy and a healthy baby.



Close observation of the following will help reduce the risks:

- Blood glucose levels.
- Your medication.
- Taking folic acid supplements.
- Your weight.
- Your diet.
- Your immune status (Having the Rubella vaccination if needed).
- Alcohol consumption.
- Smoking.

Blood glucose levels

Good blood glucose control before and during pregnancy is essential. You should have an HbA1c (glycated haemoglobin – average of blood glucose levels in the last 3 months) of below 7% (53 mmol/l). You need to start monitoring your blood glucose levels four times a day. This will allow us to ensure that we get a good picture of your levels at different times throughout the day.

See your GP for a referral or contact the Diabetes team directly.