

## Did you know?

- The first few weeks of your baby's development are the most important.
- Within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy your baby starts off as a series of cells.
- By four to five weeks mother and baby are already connected by the umbilical cord.
- At six to seven weeks your baby is about one centimetre long and its heart beat can be detected.
- By eight weeks, ears, arms, fingers and toes are already starting to form and your baby is about two centimetres long.
- At 12 weeks of pregnancy the baby is fully formed and can open its fists and mouth.

Looking after yourself properly and contacting a midwife will ensure the best possible start in life for your baby.

## Approximate size of your baby during the first 12 weeks

Your baby starts off as a few cells

- at **4-5 weeks** is approximately **5mm**
- at **6 weeks** is approximately **8mm**
- at **9 weeks** is approximately **22mm**
- at **12 weeks** is approximately **50mm**

*(The actual size of the of the baby's growth varies for each women)*



## How do I contact a midwife?

To get in touch with your community midwife please ring:

**Colchester 01206 742369**

**Clacton 01255 201600**

**Harwich 01255 503700**

Your midwife is also available to help if you are unsure about continuing with your pregnancy and would like to discuss your options further.

### Appointment Details

Name of midwife:

Appointment date:

Appointment time:

In acknowledgement of the original leaflet produced by NHS Doncaster & South Humber NHS Trust.

Just found out that you are pregnant?

**Advice & Information on what to do next...**



**NHS**  
North East Essex

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## What Next?

**The first 12 weeks of your pregnancy are the most important time in your baby's development.**

Early contact with a health professional is important, as it will help you to make informed choices about your pregnancy.

Where ever you live in North East Essex you can now contact a Midwife as soon as you find out you are pregnant.



## Why contact someone?

**They can:**

- Give you up to date information about looking after yourself and your baby during your pregnancy.
- Help you to plan and make decisions about the rest of your pregnancy.
- Help you to plan where you want to give birth to your baby i.e. home birth or hospital.
- Help you to decide what postnatal care you would like i.e. home care or community.
- Answer any queries or questions you may have.
- Give you food and nutrition advice for yourself, and feeding your baby.
- Help you with any concerns you may have about previous illness or family history that may affect your pregnancy.
- Inform you if you are entitled to Healthy Start vitamins and vouchers.
- Give you advice on recommended vitamin supplements such as vitamin D.



**For more information on local maternity services please visit the following website [www.northeastessex.nhs.uk/maternity-services-liaison-committee](http://www.northeastessex.nhs.uk/maternity-services-liaison-committee)**

## What else do I need to do?

- **Take 400 micrograms of folic acid** every day, within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy to help reduce risk of Spina Bifida.
- **Eat at least five portions** of fruit and vegetables a day.
- **Drink water** to keep yourself hydrated. It will also help with your kidney and bowel functions.
- **Stop smoking.** For help and advice about stopping smoking contact Smoke Free Pregnancy 0800 169 9 169 or local service 0800 731 2656.
- **Stop taking recreational drugs.** For help and advice to stop taking drugs please contact FRANK on 0800 77 66 00.
- **Avoid drinking alcohol.** If you do decide to drink, it is recommended that you have no more than one or two units once or twice a week (one unit equals half a pint of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider [3 to 5% ABV] one small glass of wine, or one 25ml of spirit. Alcopops are about 1.5 units).
- **Take gentle physical activity** such as walking or swimming. Exercise during pregnancy is proven to increase energy levels, reduce constipation and help you to sleep better. If in doubt, please consult your midwife or family doctor.
- **Take plenty of relaxation time** for yourself. Eat little and often as this can help prevent you from feeling sick early in your pregnancy.
- **If taking medication please seek medical advice.**

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