

Maternity Care at Hadlow Medical Centre

Congratulations on your pregnancy! This leaflet has been compiled to explain a few aspects of your maternity care.

"Booking" appointment

Please aim to see your GP as soon as your pregnancy is confirmed. Your GP will inform the midwife. The arrangements for your booking appointment vary depending on whether you plan to have your baby at Maidstone Hospital or Pembury Hospital:

- **Pembury Hospital:** A Community midwife will contact you and will usually arrange to see you at your home.
- **Maidstone Hospital:** Your GP will write to the hospital and you will be notified by post of your "booking appointment" at the hospital.

Your "booking appointment" takes about one hour and is an opportunity to discuss your pregnancy in depth. The midwife will ask a lot of questions regarding your health and lifestyle and has a duty to explain the screening tests and scans that we offer pregnant women. We recommend that you take folic acid supplements during the first twelve weeks of your pregnancy (folic acid tablets are available from the Chemist).

Routine Antenatal Checks Following your "booking" appointment we recommend that you attend for routine checks at the following stages of your pregnancy: 16 weeks, and every four weeks until you are 28 weeks pregnant. Then at 30, 32, 34, 36 weeks and 38, 39, 40 weeks. The midwife holds an antenatal clinic at Hadlow Medical Centre on Wednesdays from 12:00a.m. to 13:30p.m. If this is not convenient then you can see your GP in normal surgery hours. You may opt to be seen at the hospital antenatal clinic if you wish.

Your Midwives The midwife attached to Hadlow Medical Centre is a member of the Pembury Hospital "Tonbridge" team, a group of about nine community midwives. If she is unavailable, another member of their team will see you. They will guide you through your pregnancy giving you all the relevant information. The midwives and your GP are more than happy to see you at any time if you have any questions or are concerned about anything. When the time comes to have your baby, whenever possible, one of the midwives from the Tonbridge team will look after you during your labour.

After the Birth of your Baby When you have had your baby a midwife from your team will come and visit you at home. Generally most families are fairly confident ten days after the birth, but the midwife will continue to visit for up to 28 days if necessary.

Our Health Visitor will be available to give you advice concerning the health and care of your baby. She can be contacted at her office: telephone 01732 357106. She holds a baby clinic at Hadlow Medical Centre on Friday afternoons on the first Friday of the month, during term time only.

Your doctor will be available if you or your baby develop any health problems or concerns after the birth.

If you have any queries please contact the midwifery office: 0845 155 1000 and select the option for Pembury Hospital, Extension 3488.

We wish you well!

INFORMATION ON ROUTINE BLOOD TESTS FOR INFECTIONS IN PREGNANCY

As part of care during pregnancy it is recommended that you have a routine blood test which screens for the following important infections:

- **Rubella (German Measles)**
- **Hepatitis B**
- **HIV**
- **Syphilis**

Although these infections are uncommon, they are important because if they are detected early and you receive proper treatment, damage to you and your baby can be reduced or prevented. Please take time to read the rest of this leaflet and feel free to discuss any queries you have with your midwife or doctor.

About these blood tests These tests can be done from one blood sample taken at your 12-16 week booking visit. Your midwife will tell you how and when you will be informed of your blood test results. You should tell your midwife if there are any tests which you do not want to have. Although they are optional, it is strongly advised that all women have all these tests.

Confidentiality

Discussion regarding any of these tests is entirely confidential. Both hospitals and community clinics have confidentiality guidelines. Your midwife can give you more information about this matter.

Rubella (German Measles)

This viral disease is now uncommon, mainly because young people are vaccinated with the MMR vaccine. Rubella is usually a mild illness which causes a rash and fever. However, if a woman catches Rubella in early pregnancy it can be passed on to the baby causing serious disabilities or even miscarriage. A test for Rubella will reassure most women that they are immune to the virus (either from past infection or previous vaccination). Pregnant women without immunity are advised to avoid contact with people who have Rubella and are offered immunisation once their baby is born. This will give protection against Rubella during any future pregnancies.

Hepatitis B

This is a viral infection which affects the liver. Whilst most adults make a full recovery, some people continue to carry the virus and, after a long time, it can cause liver failure. However the outlook is worse for babies who catch Hepatitis B because 90% of them will develop a life-long infection.

Hepatitis B is transmitted sexually or by contact with blood or other body fluids. Many people with Hepatitis B do not realise they are infected. It can be passed from mother to baby during pregnancy and childbirth. It is therefore recommended that all pregnant women are tested. If a woman is found to have Hepatitis B, she can be referred to a specialist for further care. With parental consent, the baby will be immunised (vaccinated) soon after birth. This will prevent infection in 90-95% of cases and will also protect the baby so that breast feeding is safe.

HIV

HIV is a virus (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) which affects the immune system and can cause AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). Although HIV is not common in West Kent, some women are at risk. Over the last few years great advances have been made in the treatment of HIV, particularly in reducing the risk of passing the infection from mother to child. An adult with HIV infection may remain well for many years and people who are infected often do not know that they have the infection. HIV can be transmitted

sexually, or by contact with infected blood or through contaminated needles. It can also be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy, at delivery or through breastfeeding. At present there is no vaccine against HIV. Very few children who are infected with HIV survive into adulthood in good health. A substantial number of these children die early from their infection and most of those who remain alive have episodes of chronic ill health and are on lifelong medications. It is recommended that all women are tested for HIV because should the test prove positive, drug treatments are now available to benefit both mother and baby. If the mother takes antiviral treatment during pregnancy, has her baby delivered by caesarian section and does not breastfeed, the risk of passing HIV to her baby can be reduced from 1 in 6 to around 1 in 100. If a woman is found to be HIV positive she will be referred to the specialist HIV service for further care. The insurance industry has indicated that women who are tested for HIV as part of antenatal screening should not have problems obtaining insurance or mortgages provided the result is negative.

Syphilis

Syphilis is a bacterial infection and although it is uncommon in the UK, it is more widespread in some other countries. It is usually sexually transmitted, but may also be passed from an infected mother to her unborn child. This can cause abnormalities, miscarriage or stillbirth. Most infected people do not have any obvious symptoms, so a blood test for Syphilis is traditionally offered to all pregnant women. If Syphilis is found, a simple course of antibiotics can be given. As well as helping the baby, having the antibiotic treatment will also help the mother. If it is left untreated for many years, Syphilis can have serious effects on the heart and nervous system. Antibiotics can help to prevent these long-term effects.

If you would like any further information on any of the topics mentioned, please ask your midwife for details.

Useful contacts:

Ask for the midwife who lead on screening for infections in pregnancy at your local antenatal clinic:

Hospitals: tel. 0845 155 1000

Pembury ext 3029

Maidstone ext 4740

Consultants in Communicable
Disease Control

01622 710161

National AIDS Helpline

0800 567 123 (Free call)