

## Already pregnant? We can help.

If you are pregnant and you didn't plan your pregnancy we can help you. The specialist team at the hospital will see you as soon as possible to give you support, information and care.

### This is what you need to do

1. As soon as you can, contact your GP/diabetes team. They will assist with:
  - A referral to the maternity unit. You can expect an appointment within 1-2 weeks
  - Getting a prescription for Folic Acid. You may need a 5mg dose and this is only available by prescription
  - A review of your medications
2. Start testing your blood glucose levels before meals, 1 hour after meals, and before bed so that your diabetes treatment can be safely adjusted.



## Remember...

### Your diabetes team are here to help you!

We can help you with contraception, planning your pregnancy and help you to have a healthy baby. If you have any questions about contraception or pregnancy get in contact today.

### The Eastern Academic Health Science Network

[eahsn.org.uk](http://eahsn.org.uk) is working with local healthcare teams to support women with diabetes who are planning pregnancy.

Email: [EAHSN.diabetes@nhs.net](mailto:EAHSN.diabetes@nhs.net)

### Useful resources/links

**fpa.org.uk** The website of the Family Planning Association – all you ever wanted to know about contraceptive methods, plus an easy-to-use tool to find the best contraceptive methods for you.

**diabetes.org.uk** Good section on pregnancy in the "Living with diabetes" section, on contraception in the "teenagers" section, and giving up smoking advice.

**womenwithdiabetes.net** Lots of information, video clips and other women's stories.

**gofolic.org.uk** Information on the benefits of folic acid and the Before You Frolic, Go Folic! Campaign.

**Pregnant with diabetes app** Free from Google play. Loads of information including planning for pregnancy

If this information has come at a bad time, causes you concern or is not relevant to you, please accept our sincere apologies and feel free to let us know.



# Sex, contraception and pregnancy

Important information for women with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes

## Why a bit of planning is important

If you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes and are having sex it is important to think about contraception and pregnancy.

### Contraception

If you are having sex and are not planning on having a baby soon, talk to your GP about the safest and best contraception for you. Your diabetes team can help you with more information also.

### Thinking about getting pregnant

Most women with diabetes have normal pregnancies resulting in healthy babies. However, having diabetes can increase the chance of serious complications both for you and your baby. We also know the first 6 weeks of pregnancy is the most crucial for your baby's development. If you are thinking about having a baby, planning for pregnancy and looking after yourself is important for you and your baby's health. Try and see your GP/ practice nurse or the diabetes team as soon as you start thinking about having a baby. The earlier the better, and even 6-12 months before stopping contraception is a great time to start the discussion.

### Risks and complications

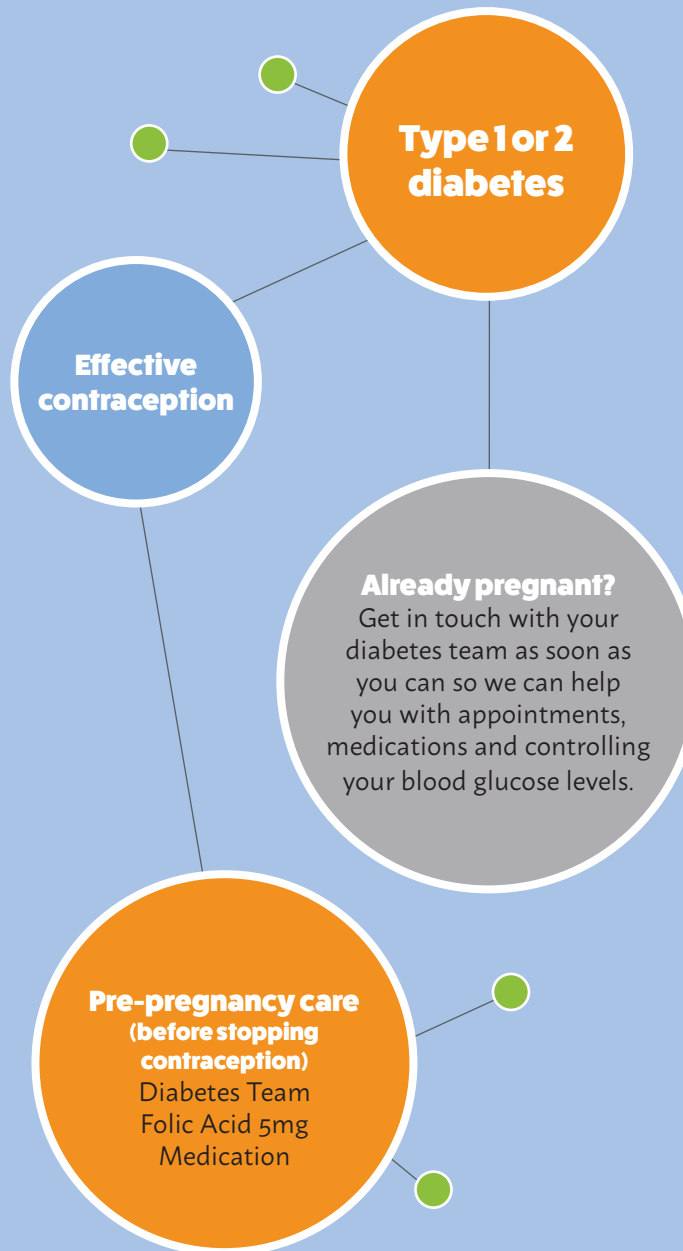


For women with diabetes who do not plan their pregnancy, the risk of a serious complication (e.g. stillbirth, serious heart or birth defect) is about 1 in 10.



Reassuringly, if you do plan your pregnancy with your diabetes team, your risk of serious complications falls closer to that of women without diabetes (1 in 50).

## The best advice we can give you is to try not to leave things to chance



## You can reduce your risk of complications during pregnancy



### 1. Plan ahead

Make an appointment with your diabetes team if you are thinking of becoming pregnant and they will work with you to help you be the healthiest you can be.



### 2. Control your blood glucose levels

Try and get your HbA1c as close to 48 mmol/mol or 6.5% as you can safely get it (without hypoglycaemia). Test your blood glucose levels before and 1 hour after meals, and before bed.



### 3. Start taking 5mg Folic Acid tablets daily

Start before conception to help prevent birth defects (especially heart and spine). You will need a prescription for this from your GP.



### 4. Have your medications reviewed

Particularly blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes tablets as not all are safe in early pregnancy. Your doctor will help you decide which ones to continue and which to stop or swap to a safer alternative.



### 5. See a specialist dietician

Discuss pregnancy nutrition with a dietician to help you and your baby to have the best possible health.



### 6. Ask for help to stop smoking

If you are a smoker a stop-smoking specialist can help you, refer yourself, or ask the diabetes team about a referral.