

Contraceptive choices after having a baby

Contraception is an important part of your postnatal care even if it is the last thing on your mind at the moment. Many unplanned pregnancies occur within the first few months after having a baby, so it is best to be prepared.

How soon can I have sex again?

As soon as you and your partner feel ready. It may be some time before you want to as you may have stitches or bruising which may make sex uncomfortable. Discuss any concerns with your partner, midwife, GP, Nurse or Specialist Public Health Nurse.

When will my periods start again?

If you are bottle feeding or mixed feeding, your periods could start as early as 5-6 weeks after the birth. If you are breastfeeding exclusively, your period may not start until you stop breastfeeding.

How soon do I need to use contraception?

You will need to start using contraception from three weeks (21 days) after the birth.

Do not wait until your period returns or for your postnatal check. You will be able to become pregnant before your period starts again.

Will breastfeeding act as contraception?

Breastfeeding can delay the ovulation (release of the egg) and prevent periods for up to six months. If used correctly breastfeeding can be used as contraception and is 98% effective in preventing pregnancy for up to six months.

Breast feeding as contraception is only effective IF:

- You are fully breastfeeding and rarely top up feeds with any other fluids such as formulae milk or expressed milk **AND**
- You are breastfeeding for up to six months after birth **AND**
- You haven't had a period yet since delivery.

Breastfeeding as contraception becomes less effective sometimes and other methods of contraception should be used if any of the following happens:

- You are breastfeeding less often through the day and night or no night feeds occur.
- You are using other top up feeds; formula milk.
- You have had your first period.
- You are breastfeeding for more than six months.

Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARCs)

These methods are more effective than short acting methods and last longer so you do not need to remember to take/use them every day.

The contraceptive injection (depo-provera):

Can be started straight away even if breast-feeding. It may / can cause irregular or heavier bleeding if started before 6 weeks post-delivery. Lasts 13 weeks.

✓ Available at Calderdale Royal Hospital prior to postnatal discharge.

Contraceptive implant (Nexplanon):

Can be started straight away even if breast feeding. It is placed in the arm and releases progestogens into the blood stream. It lasts for 3 years. Periods may become irregular, lighter, heavier or longer. Many women stop having periods altogether.

✓ A midwife or doctor can arrange referral to your local community contraception services for Nexplanon.

Intrauterine contraception (IUC):

This includes both the copper coil (which contains no hormones) and also various other coils which contain progesterone (progestogen) hormones. Both are safe to use when breastfeeding and can be inserted within 48 hours after vaginal or caesarean delivery.

If not inserted within 48 hours then it is advised to wait until 4 weeks after delivery and use alternative contraception until then. Depending on the type they last from 5 up to 10 years but can be removed earlier.

Once the coil is fitted, you will be referred and will be required to attend a follow-up consultation 6 weeks postnatally with a health professional at your local community contraceptive services, so that the coil threads can be trimmed.

✓ Available at Calderdale Royal Hospital at the time of caesarean section.

Sterilisation

It is advised to wait a while before making a decision to make sure you and your partner are certain that you do not want any more children. Sterilisation is intended to be a permanent method of contraception.

Female sterilisation:

Involves cutting, clipping or tying your tubes. Some women who have an elective caesarean opt to be sterilised at the same time. Failure rate in woman is 1 in 200 and involves risks of keyhole surgery and general anaesthesia.

✓ *Available at Calderdale Royal Hospital prior to postnatal discharge.*

Male sterilisation/vasectomy:

More effective than female sterilisation, failure rate are 1 in 2000. This can be done by many GP surgeries and out patient clinics under local anaesthesia.

Short acting contraceptive method

Progesterone only pill (POP): Safe when breastfeeding. Can be started immediately after childbirth.

✓ *Available at Calderdale Royal Hospital prior to postnatal discharge.*

Combined oral contraceptive pill (COCP):

These contain both oestrogen and progesterone. Those not breastfeeding and with no risk factors for developing blood clots can start COCP at 21 days after delivery.

Those breastfeeding or with risk factors for developing a blood clot (eg smoking, caesarean section or high BMI) should wait at least 6 weeks before starting COCP. If you're not sure if you have risk factors for blood clots discuss this with your midwife, doctor or GP.

Contraceptive Patch or Ring

Like the COCP, these methods also contain both oestrogen and progesterone and therefore should **not** be started immediately after giving birth, due to the risk of developing a blood clot.

Diaphragm or cap:

It is advised to wait 6 weeks after-delivery before using. Make sure that the size is reviewed by a doctor or nurse as your cervix and vagina change shape during pregnancy and after delivery.

Natural family planning:

'Natural' family planning, known as Fertility Awareness Methods (FAM) has a much higher failure rate than other methods when looking at typical use (24% getting pregnant within a year of use). Those planning to use FAM can use it from 4 weeks after childbirth if not breastfeeding, and from 6 months following childbirth if breastfeeding.

Speak to your midwife, doctor, GP, practice nurse or sexual health service to help decide which is the best contraceptive option for you.

Local Sexual Health Service contact numbers:

Calderdale Broad Street Plaza - 01422 261370

Huddersfield Locala Sexual Health - 030 3330 9981

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Antenatal Clinic

Telephone No: 01422 224125

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"