

Pregnancy & Being Pregnant



Introduction

Pregnancy is a big change for people. You might believe that you're pregnant or had a test come back positive and think "what next?". It's important to know what your options are and what support you can access during this time.

What to do if you think you're pregnant

Signs of pregnancy

Firstly, look out for signs of pregnancy. One of the first signs of pregnancy is a missed period. Other symptoms of early pregnancy may include:

- a shorter or lighter period

- mood changes
- feeling more tired than usual
- feeling sick or vomiting
- stomach cramps
- tender breasts
- more frequent urination

Everybody is different and you may only experience some of these symptoms or none at all.

If the reason you are worried about pregnancy is because you have been sexually assaulted, there are private and confidential supports to help. They are free and offer support over the phone, online or face to face. It is important to seek medical assistance, including emergency contraception, as soon as possible. Contact [Full Stop Australia](#) on 1800 424 017, which is available 24/7 for private and confidential support. You can learn more about emergency contraception in our [Sexual Health](#) section.



Step 1 - Take a pregnancy test:

It's your decision about what to do if you think you're pregnant. The first step is to get a pregnancy test to confirm you are pregnant. [Pregnancy, Birth & Baby](#) has more information on signs of pregnancy, what to do next and what to think about while you're making your decision.

There are 2 options for pregnancy tests. You can use a home pregnancy test or go to your local doctor and ask for a pregnancy test. Keep in mind, if you use a home pregnancy test and it comes back positive, you should visit your doctor as soon as possible to get another test to confirm the result and access health care. It's important to get a test as soon as you can, so you can receive the support you need moving forward.

If you have financial concerns around purchasing a pregnancy test, there might be free options in your area. Services such as Family Planning Australia provide pregnancy tests fee free.

You can find [Family Planning Australia Clinics](#) through their website.

Where to get pregnancy tests

At Home: Home pregnancy tests are available from your local supermarket (self-serve checkouts are great if you are worried about privacy) or over the counter from your local chemist. If you're a bit nervous, ask a friend to go with you.

Pregnancy test at the doctors: If a home pregnancy test comes back positive, you will need to book an appointment with a doctor, . You can also book in with a doctor if you want to double check the results of the home pregnancy test. You can book an appointment or go to a drop in centre and ask for a pregnancy test. This can be a blood test or a urine test. If you're unsure about speaking to a doctor, see [visiting the doctor](#) and [your rights at the doctor](#).

Read the instructions carefully and follow the directions. Pregnancy tests work by testing the hormone levels in your body that change when you are pregnant. For them to detect these hormones, you need to take the test about **14 days after** you think you may have fallen pregnant (the information in the test will tell you – the main thing is not to take it too early, or it might not show up positive yet if you

are pregnant). This important information will be on the packaging of the test. Tip – try to buy a pregnancy test that has two tests in the package so you can be extra sure of the result. It's also more cost effective. Find out more about pregnancy tests at [Children By Choice](#).

There is support out there, you do not have to feel alone.

Step 2 – seek support:

If you are pregnant, it is normal to feel a mix of emotions. You might be excited, scared, happy, sad, or all of these at once. There is support out there so you do not have to feel alone. It is important to seek support during this time to help with the next steps and to know your options. You can get support online, over the phone, or contact a sexual health clinic or youth service for support and information.

There are services and information available to support you:

- [Family Planning NSW Talkline](#) 1300 658 886: free and confidential counselling and advice for pregnancy options. You can also ask them to help you find your local youth health centre.
- [Kids Helpline](#) 1800 551 800: free and confidential counselling for people aged 5 to 25 years.
- [Brave Foundation](#): great information on what steps to take and what to consider if you find out you are pregnant.



If you are pregnant, what are your options?

Choosing what to do next may be a hard decision, or it may be easy. You may have been trying to have a baby or it could be a shock. [Family Planning NSW](#) have a pregnancy options booklet with information about support, helping to decide what to do and what options are available to you.

Talk to someone you trust, whether it's a partner, family member, friend, youth worker or another adult in your life. It's good to talk to someone about how you're feeling. Think about your current situation, your goals and dreams for the future, and how your decision may impact these goals. The decision is yours to make and you have several options.

It's important to speak with a health professional (a doctor or a sexual health nurse) who can explain your options and how they might impact you. You can access private and confidential support by talking to a nurse online at [Family Planning NSW Talkline](#) or call them on 1300 658 886.

Do I need to tell my parents?

That is up to you. There is no law that says you need to tell your parents if you are pregnant, or about what choices you make. You might be worried about your parent's reaction, but they could be a vital source of support. Depending on your age and circumstances, they might need to find out eventually. If you want to know more information on what a doctor can and can't talk to your parents about, have a look at the [your rights at the doctor](#) page.

If you're not comfortable telling your parents, it's important to find a source of support to help you. You could speak to someone you trust, a youth worker or a sexual health worker who can talk through your options. Find out more at [Youth Law Australia](#).

Moving forward with the pregnancy

There are resources and tips to support you through pregnancy and when the baby is born.

You will need to link in with appropriate health care support. These appointments are called antenatal care appointments. They happen regularly throughout pregnancy to ensure you and baby are doing well. [Healthdirect](#) has more information about these appointments.

Your doctor should be able to help guide you on who to connect with.



Expectant partners

If you're going to be a new parent and you are the partner of the person having the baby, this time can also be scary and exciting. [Raising Children](#) has some resources to help you along your journey, and how you can support the mother of the child. There is also text support for expectant dads through [SMS4Dads](#).

Abortion

An abortion is a safe procedure that ends pregnancy. Your right to have an abortion is the same as your right to have any other medical treatment. There are 2 ways abortion can be performed. One involves taking medication (medical abortion) and one involves a surgical procedure (surgical abortion). Find out more at [NSW Family Planning](#).

If you want to end a pregnancy you will need to find a doctor or medical service that performs abortions near you. If you are under 18 years, the doctor or health professional will need to make sure you are mature enough to make an informed decision, and that you understand the treatment and what is involved. For more information see [Youth Law Australia's Pregnancy page](#).

There is no requirement for the partner to consent or be aware of the procedure, as parenting rights only exist once the child is born. If you are under 14 years, your parents or guardians usually need to give consent for abortion. If you need help or would like support in discussing your options (no matter what age you are) you can start by contacting a sexual health service or a youth health service. You can also phone the [NSW Family Planning Talkline](#) on **1300 658 886**, or [NSW Pregnancy Choices Helpline](#) on **1800 008 463** get non-judgmental and trustworthy information on your options.

If you choose to have an abortion, make sure you stay connected with someone to talk through it afterwards.
