

# Planning a family when you have diabetes

## Introduction

This leaflet gives advice for patients with diabetes who are planning a family.

## Planning or thinking about pregnancy

It is recommended that you aim for good blood glucose control before pregnancy to help reduce any risk of complications for both you and your unborn baby.

A baby's development will begin before you know you are pregnant. In the first 12 weeks of pregnancy your baby is very sensitive to high blood glucose levels. This is known to cause some congenital abnormalities, such as heart defects.

Please let the Diabetes Team know that you are thinking about pregnancy before you stop using contraception. The contact details for the team are at the end of this leaflet.

Ideally, 3 months before you stop using contraception you should:

- take 5mg of folic acid once a day (available on prescription only)
- stop smoking
- aim for your HbA1c blood test to be a maximum of 48mmol/mol with minimal hypos
- have a retinal eye screen review
- have a medication review with your GP or consultant (cholesterol and blood pressure lowering medications are not safe during pregnancy)
- aim to be a healthy weight as this will help to increase your chances of becoming pregnant and having a healthy pregnancy. Please let the Diabetes Team know if you would like support with your weight.

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## Patient Information

While you are working towards a pregnancy, please aim to keep your blood glucose levels within the following targets:

- a blood glucose level of 5–7 mmol/litre on waking **and**
- a blood glucose level of 4–7 mmol/litre before meals at other times of the day
- if you are using a glucose sensor, rtCGM or CGM (FreeStyle Libre), aim for a Time in Range (TIR) of 70%

The diabetes team will be able to support you to achieve these targets

### Ready for pregnancy?

- Recent HbA1c checked and discussed with diabetes team
- Taking Folic Acid 5 mg for 3 months
- In regular contact with the Diabetes Team

Please continue with contraception while you are working on the above checklist.

### During pregnancy

Please advise the Diabetes Team as soon as you receive a positive pregnancy test. Once your pregnancy has been confirmed you will have obstetric and diabetes outpatient appointments every 2 to 4 weeks.

The Obstetric Team will monitor you and your baby throughout your pregnancy and you will have regular contact with the Diabetes Team.

An eye examination will be carried out at least twice during your pregnancy, normally following your first antenatal clinic appointment and at 28 weeks of pregnancy.

**Patient  
Information**

## Blood glucose targets during pregnancy

During pregnancy the blood glucose targets are as follows:

- less than 5.3mmol/L pre meals
- less than 7.8mmol/L one hour post meals
- less than 6.4mmol/L two-hour post meals
- if you are using a glucose sensor you will be encouraged to change your glucose targets to 3.9-7.8mmol/l with a 70% TIR (time in range)

Your Diabetes Team will support you to reach these targets.

## Contact information

### Diabetes Team

Tel: 0300 422 4266 or

Tel: 0300 422 8613 (answerphone)

Messages are listened to daily and calls are returned within 48 hours, Monday to Friday.

Email: [ghn-tr.diabetespregnancy@nhs.net](mailto:ghn-tr.diabetespregnancy@nhs.net)

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