

+OVENS - BALLINCOLLIG MEDICAL CENTRE

The Clinic,
Old Quarter,
Ballincollig, Cork.
Phone: 021 487 2555
Fax: 021 487 5538

www.corkdoctor.com

Barnagore,
Ovens,
Cork.
Phone: 021 487 0135
Fax: 021 487 0939

Pregnancy Advice

Congratulations on your Pregnancy

Antenatal Care

Congratulations on your pregnancy and we wish you a healthy 9 months.

Once you have signed the Mother and Infant form, you will receive a letter in the post from the HSE confirming your antenatal care. This is a shared care between us and the hospital. The scheme entitles you to 6 routine antenatal visits. The below is the *approximate* schedule of covered visits:

Number of weeks pregnant	Visit to GP	Visit to maternity Hospital / Obstetrician
Before 12 weeks (1 st or booking visit)	*	
Approx 12 weeks + 'dating scan'		*
20 weeks		*
24 weeks	*	
28 weeks	* Unless 1st pregnancy	* (in case of first pregnancy)
+/- 30 wks if needed		
32 Weeks		*
34 Weeks	*	
36 weeks		*
37 Weeks	*	
38 Weeks		*
39 weeks	*	
40 Weeks		*
2 Weeks post natal (for baby)	*	
6 weeks post natal (for both mum and baby)	*	

Blood tests are not covered - we charge €25 for this service, or it can be done for free in the hospital (CUMH). Attendances for non-antenatal issues will be charged.

<https://www2.hse.ie/pregnancy/> has some useful information.

Please bring a urine sample to every appointment.

After your baby is born, your public health nurse will visit your home. Your GP or practice nurse will check your baby at 2 weeks. At 6 weeks, your GP will check you and your baby.

Your GP is not covered to provide care for home births.

Please note that extra visits, blood tests, injections, medical certificates and non-pregnancy related issues (eg sore throats, ear syringing) may be charged. Glucose tolerance tests are free in CUMH or €60 here in the practice.

Social Welfare:

You can download the Maternity benefit form from the social welfare website

(<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/apply-for-maternity-benefit/>). This must be filled in by yourself, your employer and your GP (after 24 weeks). This will ensure that you receive maternity benefit. A copy of this can be used for your partner's paternity benefit.

Things you should do:

- Take folic acid tablets ideally from before you become pregnant until 12 weeks of pregnancy. This helps to prevent spinal cord problems developing in the baby.
 1. The dose is usually 400 micrograms (0.4 mg) a day. This can be bought from pharmacies.
 2. The dose is higher and needs a prescription (5 mg daily) if you have an increased risk of having a child with a spinal cord problem. That is if you had a previously affected pregnancy OR your partner or a close relative have a spinal cord defect OR you have coeliac disease OR you take drugs for epilepsy/certain arthritis drugs OR you have sickle cell anaemia, thalassaemia or diabetes.
- Eat a healthy diet. Eat plenty of fruit and veg. Include foods rich in iron, calcium and folic acid. You may consider taking Vitamin D 10mg as this vitamin comes from the sun and a lot of people in Ireland are deficient. A pregnancy specific multivitamin eg. Pregnacare, pregnaplan, sanotogem mum-to-be has a variety of useful vitamins.
- Wash your hands after handling raw meat, or handling cats to avoid certain germs which can be harmful to a developing baby. Also wear gloves when you are gardening or handling cat litter.
- Most exercise can be continued during pregnancy and being fit can help with your pregnancy & your labour. However do not take up any new exercises in pregnancy. Pregnancy Pilates/yoga is great for back and pelvic problems.

Things you should avoid

- Too much vitamin A. Don't eat liver, liver pâté, or take cod liver oil or vitamin A
- Beware of a bug called Listeriosis. Don't eat undercooked meats and eggs (eg homemade mayonnaise), soft cheeses such as brie or camembert or stilton, pâtés, shellfish, raw fish, or unpasteurised milk including goat's milk. (Hard cheeses and processed cottage cheese are safe) Cook all food well through. Take only pasteurized dairy.
- Fish which may contain a lot of mercury. Don't eat shark, marlin, swordfish. Also, limit the amount of tuna to no more than the equivalent of six tuna sandwiches per week.
- Avoid Sheep, lambs, cat faeces, cat litters which may carry certain infections. If you have cats, use gloves or try to avoid changing litter trays.

Things you should stop or cut down

Alcohol – It is unknown if there is any safe level of alcohol in pregnancy so we advise complete abstinence. If you do choose to drink, have no more than 1-2 drinks, once or twice a week maximum.

Smoking - you are strongly advised to stop completely. Smoking can cause miscarriages, preterm labour, growth problems among other problems. If you can't stop with will power alone, you can talk to your doctor about nicotine replacement products. See also quit.ie

Caffeine - in tea, coffee, cola, etc. Have no more than 200mg daily.

Other things to consider

Your medication - including herbal and 'over the counter' medicines. Is it safe to take when you are pregnant? No medication can be completely guaranteed safe in pregnancy but some are more beneficial than harmful eg. thyroid medications. If on regular medications, it is best to discuss these with your doctor before getting pregnant, but failing that you should talk to your doctor as soon as possible. Over the counter medications should be discussed with the pharmacist- some medications appear to be safe enough including paracetamol for pain/fever, gaviscon & rennie's for heartburn, canesten cream/pessaries for thrush and fybogel for constipation but ask if in doubt.

Your work environment. Do you work with chemicals/radiation, etc, which may be harmful? You may need to discuss this with your manager.

Medical conditions. For example, if you have diabetes, epilepsy, or other medical conditions you may need special advice before becoming pregnant.

Immunisation: Different illnesses are more prevalent at different times. For example at present, it is still recommended that women get the *flu vaccine* (20euro) at all stages of pregnancy. At present women are recommended the whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine in the 20-36 weeks as it protects your newborn baby from this serious illness. Some occupations may benefit from hepatitis B/ chickenpox if you are at increased risk of getting this infection- these should be done before considering pregnancy.

Infections

Chicken Pox: If you come in contact with chicken pox *and* have never had chickenpox yourself (or cannot recall), phone GP or CUMH (4920500) to check if you are immune on your bloods.

Hand, foot and mouth: There are no implications for the baby.

Slapped Cheek (Parvovirus): Contact your GP for bloods if you have come in *close* contact with definite 'slapped cheek syndrome'.

Routine ultrasound scans

An ultrasound scan is a safe and painless test which uses sound waves to create images of structures inside your body such as an unborn baby. A routine ultrasound scan is usually offered in hospital at:

- 11-13 weeks of pregnancy to accurately date the age of the unborn baby and expected time of birth, and to check for multiples
- 20-22 weeks of pregnancy to look for physical abnormalities of the unborn baby (Anatomy/Anomaly scan)
- 32 weeks- a quick scan is often done to look at fluid/afterbirth location
- Private scans can be done in early pregnancy to detect a heartbeat (approx 8 weeks), nuchal translucency for Down's syndrome at 11-14 weeks and anomaly scans if not

offered routinely (approx 20-24 weeks) if you like- you can arrange these yourself with private baby scan companies, readily available in Cork.

1) <http://corkmotherandbabyscans.ie/> and 2) <http://www.babyscan.ie/>)

- Early pregnancy clinic/Aislinn Suite CUMH- this can be arranged if you have spotting or recurrent miscarriages. (0214920550)

Watch your weight

When you are pregnant, don't 'eat for two' and overeat. Too much weight gain will increase your risk of developing problems with the pregnancy, and extra weight is difficult to lose after the birth. The best way to avoid weight gain is simply to eat a healthy balanced diet. If you are already obese or overweight, ideally you should try to lose some weight before becoming pregnant. This is to reduce the risk of pregnancy complications which are more common in obese women eg. gestational diabetes.

Weight will gradually begin to increase after the 12th or 14th week. It is between the 20th and 30th week that the most weight is gained. An excessive amount of weight gain at this point is advised against, as it can be associated with the potentially serious condition known as pre-eclampsia.

To book an appointment in Cork University Maternity Hospital

Public: Your doctor will fax through a letter to the CUMH requesting a booking visit and scan- if you don't get a response in a few weeks after seeing your GP, ring 021 4920600.

If you choose to go Privately- please ring private secretaries to arrange yourself: (some private secretary numbers below). There will be an excess charge on top of your insurance plan for this.

Prof John Higgins/Prof Richard Green/ / Dr Mairead O' Riordan/ Dr Keelin O' Donoghue - all operate from Consultants Private clinic in CUH – please ring 4941397

Dr. Noirin Russell, Consultants Private clinic in CUH 021 4941392

Dr. Matt Hewitt and Dr Suzanne O Sullivan Cork Clinic 0214386036 (corkwomensclinic.com/)

Dr. Moya McMenamin, Wilton 021 430 1357

Dr. Dan McKenna works from Cork Women's Clinic, 021 4348931/32/34

Dr. Fergus McCarthy Consultants private clinic: 021 4941392

Dr Minna Geisler, Consultants private clinic 0851632782

Further information:

Be very cautious about taking advice from the internet. If you are looking for a reliable source of information, we would advise the

1) NHS pregnancy book. (<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/pregnancy-and-baby-care.aspx#close>) This is a very valuable source of free and reliable information.

2) Cork University Maternity Hospital website

http://www.cuh.hse.ie/Our_Services/Clinical_Services/Cork_University_Maternity_Hospital/Services_Provided/

3) HSE advice: <https://www2.hse.ie/pregnancy/>

If you have concerns out of hours, please ring the CUMH Emergency room on 0214920552 and speak to one of the midwives.