

Trying to have a baby?

Tips and information for people living in north east London

This information is for people who are trying to have a baby and are registered with a GP in Barking and Dagenham, the City of London, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets or Waltham Forest.

Trying to have a baby – tips to increase your chances

There are a number of things you can do to increase your chances of getting pregnant. For more detailed advice visit the [NHS](#) and [Fertility Network UK](#) websites.

- **Regular sex:** have sex every two to three days without using contraception – make sure the sperm enters the vagina.
- **Timing of sex:** have sex around the time you are ovulating – this is usually 12 to 16 days before your period starts.
- **Eat healthily:** try to maintain a [healthy weight](#), eat a healthy, varied diet and limit caffeine. Visit the [NHS website](#) for more nutrition advice.
- **Avoid alcohol:** it is a good idea to avoid or cut down on drinking alcohol while you try to get pregnant and also if you become pregnant. The [NHS website](#) recommends drinking no more than one to two units of alcohol once or twice a week.
- **Don't smoke:** it is very important not to smoke while you try to get pregnant and if you become pregnant. It can help if your partner, if you have one, stops too.
- **Take supplements:** it is recommended you take 400 micrograms of folic acid every day if you are trying to get pregnant and then until you are 12 weeks pregnant. Visit the [NHS website](#) for more advice on vitamins and supplements.

When to see your GP about your fertility

Over 80% of people will become pregnant within one year if they are having regular vaginal sex and the person trying to get pregnant is under the age of 40. If you want advice from your GP, please first make sure you meet the below criteria:

- **aged under 36**, you need to have had 12 months of regular unprotected sex or six self-funded cycles of intrauterine insemination (IUI)*.
- **aged 36 and over**, you need to have had six months of regular unprotected sex or three self-funded cycles of IUI.

Your GP will refer you for assessment and investigations, if appropriate.

**Refer to page 2 for more information about IUI.*

Our fertility policy offers a number of NHS funded treatments for both individuals and couples with a fertility problem who are registered with a GP in north east London, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status. The policy doesn't cover all fertility treatments, but focuses on assisted conception treatments, such as IVF and IUI.

IVF (in vitro fertilisation)

During IVF eggs are removed from the ovaries and fertilised with sperm in a laboratory. Any resulting suitable fresh or frozen fertilised eggs, called embryos, are then put into the womb to try to grow and develop – this is usually one or two embryos at a time. This process is one full IVF cycle.

Under our policy all eligible people trying to get pregnant who are aged under 40 will receive up to three full IVF cycles and those aged 40-42 will receive one full IVF cycle.

IUI (intrauterine insemination)

IUI is a type of artificial insemination where the better quality sperm are separated out and this sperm is then injected directly into the womb. This can either involve the partner's sperm or donor sperm.

Under our policy up to six cycles of IUI will be funded for eligible people:

- Trying to get pregnant using donor insemination who have fertility problems.
- With some conditions and social, cultural or religious objections to IVF.
- With a physical disability or psychosexual problem.
- With a condition that means they need IUI as part of their fertility treatment.

Who can get NHS funded fertility treatment?

We have a list of things people need to meet to get NHS fertility treatment. This is called eligibility criteria and includes things like not being too over or under weight, if you or your partner (if you have one) have a child already, your age, and if you smoke. Your doctor can explain this to you in more detail.

Mental health and wellbeing support

We recognise that trying to have a baby or having fertility treatment can impact on your mental health and wellbeing.

Fertility treatments aren't always successful, which can be hugely disappointing and upsetting for people. For example, for people aged under 43, the national success rates of IVF per cycle ranges from 11-32% depending on your age.

We believe counselling is an essential part of fertility treatment and the hospital that provides treatment will encourage you to see a counsellor and offer you an appointment with one.

For more information about the mental health and wellbeing support available in north east London, please visit www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/mental-health

Further information

For more information about the NHS funded fertility treatments available in north east London please visit: www.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/fertilityservices

For more detailed information about fertility treatment and support, please visit:

- [NHS website: Trying for a baby](#)
- [NHS website: Having a baby if you're LGBT+](#)
- [NHS website: Infertility](#)
- [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority](#)
- [Fertility Network UK](#)
- [Donor Conception Network](#)
- [Surrogacy UK](#)
- [Terence Higgins Trust: Parenthood](#)
- [Endometriosis UK: Endometriosis, fertility and pregnancy](#)