

Maternity Services

# Postnatal information for women who have had gestational diabetes



## What happens next?

If you have gestational diabetes that has been treated with insulin or tablets, the medication will stop once you have given birth to your baby.

Before you go home from hospital you will need to perform the 6 times a day blood glucose profile for 24-48 hours. This is to make sure your blood glucose levels have returned to a normal range without the aid of medication. If your blood glucose profile remains high, a plan to treat and monitor this will be made before you are discharged home.

We will write to your GP and request that they invite you to come in for a fasting blood glucose test approximately 6 weeks after you have given birth. For most women, gestational diabetes goes away after they have had their baby, however a few women will need to continue with treatment.

## What will happen longer term?

If you become pregnant again it is likely that you will develop gestational diabetes during your pregnancy. Therefore, we recommend that you have a Glucose Tolerance Test at 16 weeks and, if this is normal, a repeat test between 26-28 weeks.

Because you have had gestational diabetes, the chance of developing diabetes later in life remains high, at approximately a 50% chance. Therefore we recommend that you have some form of screening test every year at your GP's surgery. Detecting diabetes or pre-diabetes early can help prevent complications developing and means that you can receive early treatment, if needed.

## What can I do to reduce the risks of developing diabetes in the future?

Some lifestyle choices will reduce your chances of developing diabetes in later life:

- **Weight** – Try to keep to a healthy weight for your height (within your body mass index).
- **Exercise** – do some physical activity for 30 minutes a day, on at least 5 days a week, at an intensity high enough to make you breathless.
- **Healthy food choices** – eating at least five portions of fruit and green leafy vegetables a day and cutting down on fatty, sugary and fried foods.
- Research suggests that breastfeeding your baby reduces your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes or may delay the onset of diabetes in the future.

## Questions or concerns

If you have any questions or concerns, or need any further information, please contact the:

### **Diabetes Specialist Midwife**

Tel: **01865 851 039**

(8.30am to 5.00pm, weekdays except Wednesday)

Alternatively you can contact your local general practitioner.

Further information can also be found on NHS Choices website:

**[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)**

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **[PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk)**

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