

Please enable JavaScript in order to get the best experience when using this site.

- [Site Navigation](#)
- [Page Content](#)

[Menu](#)

State Government Victoria [Better Health Channel Logo](#)

[Caret](#)



-

[Health.vic](#)

[Victoria's hub for health services and business](#)



-

[DHHS](#)

[A gateway to the strategies, policies, programs and services delivered by the Department of Health & Human Services.](#)



-

[Seniors Online](#)

[Victorian government portal for older people, with information about government and community services and programs.](#)

[Show search toolbar](#)

[Contrast](#) [Sign Up](#) [Login](#)




Search

Type a minimum of three characters then press UP or DOWN on the keyboard to navigate the autocompleted search results

Navigation

[Home](#) [Close Menu](#)

- - [Conversation-Going-travelling](#)
- [Conditions and treatments](#)
 - [Conditions and treatments](#)
 - [Allergies](#)
 - [Allergies](#)
 - [Allergic reaction to packaged food](#)
 - [Anxiety](#)
 - [Arthritis](#)
 - [Asthma](#)
 - [Behavioural conditions](#)
 - [Birth defects](#)
 - [Blood and blood vessels](#)
 - [Bones muscles and joints](#)
 - [Bones muscles and joints](#)
 - [Foot care - podiatrists](#)
 - [Brain and nerves](#)
 - [Cancer](#)
 - [Complementary and alternative care](#)
 - [Dementia](#)
 - [Healthy living](#)
 - [Healthy living](#)
 - [Alcohol](#)
 - [Babies and toddlers \(0-3\)](#)
 - [Children \(4-12\)](#)
 - [Drugs and addictive behaviours](#)

- [Environmental health](#)
- [Family Violence](#)
- [Older people in hospital – Get well soon](#)
- [Health checks](#)
- [Healthy Eating](#)
 - [Nutrition for life](#)
- [Healthy mind](#)
- [Healthy pregnancy](#)
- [Immunisation](#)
- [Services and support](#)
 - [Services and support](#)
 - [Aged care services](#)
 - [Alcohol and drug services](#)
 - [LGBTI support](#)
 - [Carers, caring and respite care services](#)
 - [Child, family and relationship services](#)
 - [Disability services](#)
 - [Emergency, crisis and support services](#)
 - [End of life and palliative care services](#)
 - [Hospitals, surgery and procedures](#)
 - [Mental health services](#)
 - [Planning and coordinating healthcare](#)
 - [Pregnancy and birth services](#)
- [A-Z](#)
 - [A-Z](#)
 - [Conditions and treatments](#)
 - [Healthy living](#)
 - [Services and support](#)
 - [Videos](#)
 - [Service profiles](#)
- [Blog](#)
 - [Blog](#)
 - [Blog authors](#)
 - [Topics](#)
- [Podcast](#)
 - [Podcast](#)
 - [Influenza - Dr Brett Sutton & Prof Kanta Subbarao](#)
 - [Trauma - Anne Leadbeater OAM & Dr Rob Gordon](#)
 - [template](#)
- [Other sites](#)
 -  [Health.vic](#)  [DHHS](#)  [Seniors Online](#)
- [Sitemap](#)
- [My Health Life](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Googleplus](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Youtube](#)
- [Rss](#)
- [Conditions and treatments](#)
- [Healthy living](#)
- [Services and support](#)
- [A-Z](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Podcast](#)



[Back to Healthy pregnancy](#)

- [Home](#)
- [Healthy living](#)
- [Healthy pregnancy](#)
- [Pregnancy - obstetric emergencies](#)

Pregnancy - obstetric emergencies

- [Share \(show more\)](#)
- [Download PDF](#)
- [Listen \(show more\)](#)
[Listen](#)
- [More \(show more\)](#)
 - [Email](#)
 - [Print](#)

Tags:

- [Healthy pregnancy](#)
- [Healthy pregnancy - Health concerns during pregnancy](#)

Summary

- Obstetric emergencies are health problems that are life-threatening for pregnant women and their babies.
- An obstetric emergency may arise at any time during pregnancy, labour and birth.
- Hospital care is needed for all obstetric emergencies, as the woman may need specialist care and an extended hospital stay. This may be because of the risk of a premature birth, the loss of a baby or increased risk to the woman's health.
- If you think you or your unborn baby are at risk, call your doctor, midwife or hospital, or call 000 for an ambulance.

Pregnancy can sometimes present life-threatening health problems for a mother and her baby. These problems are called obstetric emergencies.

An obstetric emergency may arise at any time during pregnancy, labour and birth.

Obstetric emergencies during pregnancy

Obstetric emergencies that may arise during pregnancy include:

- [miscarriage](#) – the loss of a baby before 20 weeks gestation. A miscarriage cannot be stopped once it has started. The mother may need treatment for infection, or to remove remaining tissue
- [ectopic pregnancy](#) – where the fertilised egg implants in one of the fallopian tubes rather than the uterus (womb). The pregnancy cannot continue and treatment usually means the loss of the tube. If the pregnancy causes a split in the tube, this can result in pain and serious bleeding. Loss of or damage to the tube may affect the woman's ability to become pregnant in the future
- [placental abruption](#) – where the placenta separates from the uterus before birth, causing bleeding, pain and contractions
- [placenta praevia](#) – where the placenta attaches to the lower part of the uterus and partly or completely blocks the neck of the womb. As a result, the mother may suffer vaginal bleeding during pregnancy
- [pre-eclampsia and eclampsia](#) – pre-eclampsia (or pregnancy-induced high blood pressure) causes severe swelling from water retention. It can lead to kidney and liver failure. If it progresses to eclampsia (convulsions), it can be fatal for the mother and her baby
- [premature rupture of membranes \(PROM\)](#) – where the bag of amniotic fluid breaks before contractions or labour begin. This is an emergency if the waters break before 37 weeks of pregnancy and lead to a major leak of amniotic fluid or infection of the amniotic sac.

Obstetric emergencies during labour

Obstetric emergencies that may arise during pregnancy include:

- [shoulder dystocia](#) – where the baby's shoulders wedge in the birth canal after the birth of the baby's head. Depending on its position, the baby may start to lose oxygen
- [prolapsed umbilical cord](#) – where the umbilical cord is pushed down into the cervix or vagina before the baby is born. If the cord becomes compressed, the fetus does not receive enough oxygen. The result may be brain damage or even death
- [placenta accreta](#) – where the placenta is implanted too deeply in the uterine wall and cannot come out after the baby is born
- [rupture of the uterus](#) – where a weak spot in the uterus tears
- [inversion of the uterus](#) – where a portion of the placenta remains attached to the uterine wall, and pulls the uterus out
- [amniotic fluid embolism](#) – where fluid moves from the amniotic sac (bag of waters) and ends up in the mother's blood. This very rare complication can happen during pregnancy but usually occurs during strong contractions in labour and causes serious complications including death of the mother.

Why things may go wrong during pregnancy

An early pregnancy complication usually occurs because the developing baby has not properly attached or formed. This means the baby will not grow and a miscarriage occurs.

Sometimes, often for unknown reasons, a miscarriage may occur many weeks into a seemingly healthy pregnancy.

Other obstetric emergencies can be caused by a number of factors, such as trauma or for genetic reasons. Sometimes a woman's experience in earlier pregnancies can help her doctor identify possible complications and prepare for them.

What to look for – signs of an obstetric emergency

Most symptoms of pregnancy are nothing to worry about but there are some symptoms that need immediate medical attention. If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor, midwife or hospital immediately. Don't wait until your next prenatal visit.

- **Any bleeding** during pregnancy is not normal – be sure to call your doctor or midwife
 - Heavy bleeding with severe stomach pain in the first three months of pregnancy – could be a sign of ectopic pregnancy
 - Heavy bleeding with cramping in the first three to four months of pregnancy – could be a sign of miscarriage
 - Bleeding with abdominal pain in the last three months of pregnancy – could be a sign of placental abruption

- **Stomach cramps** – could be a sign of ectopic pregnancy
- **Dizziness** – could be a sign of ectopic pregnancy or pre-eclampsia
- **Severe vomiting or sickness** – could be a severe symptom of pregnancy, or could be due to an infection
- **Severe stomach pain** – could be a sign of pre-eclampsia
- **Lower back pain** – could be a sign of pre-eclampsia
- **Rapid increase in blood pressure**, possibly signalled by nose bleeds, headache or dizziness – could be a sign of pre-eclampsia
- **Blurry vision and headaches** – could be a sign of pre-eclampsia
- **Sudden and significant swelling of hands, face and feet** – could be a sign of pre-eclampsia
- **Fever** – could be a sign of an infection
- **A decrease in your baby's normal daily movements**, or if you are worried about how frequently your baby moves
- **Regular, increasingly intense contractions before 37 weeks of pregnancy** – might be a sign of premature labour
- **If your waters break before labour begins** – you may feel a gush or continual trickle of fluid that has a slightly sweet smell
- **Blackouts** (loss of consciousness) or fits (convulsions) – must be taken seriously. Call an ambulance (000) for anyone who fits and for anyone who faints or blacks out and has not recovered in a few minutes.

What to do in an obstetric emergency

If you are having an obstetric emergency, call triple zero (000) immediately.

If you are unsure whether your situation is an emergency, you can call your doctor, midwife or hospital and explain what is happening. Or just call 000.

When to call an ambulance during a home birth

You may have arranged a home birth but then changed your mind. It is absolutely fine to decide to go to hospital. You can make that decision at any point during your pregnancy or labour, right up to the actual birth.

Your midwife may recommend you transfer to a hospital if your home birth is not going to plan or because your labour is not progressing. The midwife might call an ambulance or agree that you can travel to hospital in a car (not driving yourself). At hospital, your midwife will stay with you as much as possible, but the hospital midwives and doctors will take over your care.

In addition to the obstetric emergencies mentioned above, a hospital birth may be necessary if you need:

- epidural pain relief (which must be administered by an anaesthetist)
- control of any bleeding that the midwife cannot stop
- assistance with the birth of your baby because you cannot push your baby out yourself
- help with the labour because it is too slow, or because of concerns about your baby's heartbeat or the colour of the amniotic fluid (if it contains meconium, which is baby's first poo)
- assistance because the placenta is stuck (retained placenta)
- repair of a serious tear
- special care for your baby, often because the baby has breathing problems.

Obstetric emergencies – what happens at hospital

If you are sent to hospital with pregnancy complications, a specialist will take your medical history and perform a pelvic and general physical examination.

You may have blood and urine tests (to look for infection), and you will have your heart rate and blood pressure monitored (if pre-eclampsia is suspected). Your baby's heartbeat will also be monitored.

A scan (abdominal ultrasound) may help identify whether the placenta is out of position (placenta praevia or placental abruption). It can also provide information on your baby's size, movements and heart rate, and the amount of fluid around your baby.

A hospital is the safest place for dealing with any obstetric emergency.

Treatment of emergencies during pregnancy

Obstetric emergencies during pregnancy are treated as follows:

- **miscarriage** – there is no treatment, other than ensuring the mother is not at risk of excessive bleeding or infection. Sometimes a procedure may be necessary to treat infection or remove pregnancy tissue
- **ectopic pregnancy** – the fertilised egg is removed by keyhole surgery (laparoscopy). If the fallopian tube has burst or been damaged, further surgery is needed
- **placental abruption** – bed rest may prevent further separation of the placenta and stop the bleeding. If the bleeding is very heavy or cannot be stopped, the baby may need to be born immediately. Some women and babies may need a blood transfusion
- **placenta praevia** – most babies will be born by caesarean section before their due date, however this will depend on how low the placenta is.
- **pre-eclampsia and eclampsia** – birth of the baby and delivery of the placenta is the only known cure for the condition. Medication may be used to control blood pressure and prevent convulsions. A woman near full term who has been diagnosed with mild pre-eclampsia may be advised to have her labour induced. If the baby is under 28 weeks, the mother may be admitted to hospital and given steroids to build the lungs of the baby, in case it needs to be born early. If the life of the mother or baby is at risk, the baby is delivered immediately, usually by caesarean
- **premature rupture of membranes (PROM)** – treatment depends on the number of weeks of pregnancy at which this happens. If PROM occurs before 37 weeks the mother is given intravenous antibiotics. If the baby is close to term, the mother is usually advised to have her labour induced. Induction of labour is not always needed if contractions start within 24 hours of rupture (unless the mother has had a test during the pregnancy that is positive for a bug called GBS that can make babies very unwell).

Treatment of emergencies during labour

Obstetric emergencies during labour are treated as follows:

- **shoulder dystocia** – the mother sits or lies with her knees to her chest, to free the child's shoulder. An episiotomy is also performed to widen the vaginal opening. Different manoeuvres (external and internal) can be tried to free the baby
- **prolapsed umbilical cord** – if the cord has come out the vaginal opening an immediate delivery by caesarean section is usually needed
- **placenta accreta** – the placenta is usually surgically removed after the baby is born. Other treatments and medications may be used to try to save the uterus but most commonly, a hysterectomy is needed
- **rupture of the uterus** – a ruptured uterus is repaired if possible, although a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) may be performed if the damage cannot be fixed. The mother may need a blood transfusion
- **inversion of the uterus** – an inverted uterus is moved back (either by hand or surgically) to the proper position
- **amniotic fluid embolism** – the mother is given emergency care and the baby is delivered as soon as possible.

Where to get help

- In an emergency, call 000 for an ambulance
- Your midwife or obstetrician
- Your [GP \(doctor\)](#)
- Your hospital's emergency unit or maternity unit

References

- [Pregnancy problems](#), Royal Women's Hospital, Victoria, Australia.
- [Seven pregnancy warning signs](#), 2012, WebMD, USA.
- [Early pregnancy problems](#), Royal Women's Hospital, Victoria, Australia.

Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

1/4 How would you rate this website?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Fair
- Poor

[Next](#) [Submit Now](#) [Cancel](#)

Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

Please note that we cannot answer personal medical queries.

If you are looking for health or medical advice we recommend that you:

- talk to your doctor or pharmacist
- dial triple zero (000) in an emergency
- ring NURSE-ON-CALL Tel. 1300 60 60 24.

2/4 Your Comments

Tell us who you are

Enter your comments below (optional)

[Next](#) [Submit Now](#) [Cancel](#)

Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

3/4 Questions

What are you here to do?

betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Did you find what you were looking for?

- Yes
- No

[Next](#) [Submit Now](#) [Cancel](#)

[Send us your feedback](#)

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

4/4 Your details

Postcode

Email Address

[Submit Now](#) [Cancel](#)

[Send us your feedback](#)

Thank you. Your feedback has been successfully sent.

More information

Healthy pregnancy

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- [Pregnancy and birth basics](#)
- [Stages of pregnancy](#)
- [Fertility issues and options](#)
- [Keeping healthy during pregnancy](#)
- [Health concerns during pregnancy](#)
- [Preparing for birth](#)
- [Preparing for a newborn](#)

Pregnancy and birth basics

- [Childbirth - pain relief options](#)
[Understanding your pain relief options can help you cope better with the pain of childbirth...](#)
- [Pregnancy – labour](#)
[Labour is divided into three stages. The first stage is dilation of the cervix from 0 to 10 cm, the second stage is birth of the baby, and the third stage is delivery of the placenta. Labour typically...](#)
- [Pregnancy - premature labour](#)
[Sometimes, babies arrive early. It's important to recognise premature labour, in case you and your baby need medical care...](#)
- [Contraception after giving birth](#)
[After having a baby, you need to choose an effective method of contraception if you don't want to have another baby straight away...](#)
- [If you want to get pregnant, timing is everything](#)
[If you are trying for a baby, to increase your chances of conceiving, it helps to know when you are at your most fertile, and when is the best time to have sex...](#)
- [Pregnancy testing](#)
[Sometimes, a home pregnancy test may be positive when a woman isn't pregnant...](#)
- [Folate for pregnant women](#)
[Even women who aren't planning to have a baby should increase their folate intake in case of unplanned pregnancy...](#)
- [Pregnancy - unplanned](#)
[When a woman does not want to become a parent, her pregnancy options may include abortion or adoption...](#)
- [Contraception - emergency contraception](#)

[It is best to take emergency contraception as soon as possible, ideally within 24 hours of having unprotected sex, but it still works well within 96 hours \(four days\)...](#)

Stages of pregnancy

- [Baby due date](#)

[Pregnancy is calculated from the first day of your last period, not from the date of conception...](#)

- [Pregnancy - signs and symptoms](#)

[All women experience pregnancy differently, and you will experience different symptoms at different stages of your pregnancy...](#)

- [Planning for labour and birth](#)

[Some of the signs and symptoms of going into labour may include period-like cramps, backache, diarrhoea and contractions...](#)

- [Conceiving a baby](#)

[The odds of a young fertile couple conceiving by having sexual intercourse around the time of ovulation \(the release of the egg from the ovary\) are approximately one in five every month. Around nine...](#)

- [Pregnancy stages and changes](#)

[It's helpful to have an idea of how your body may react to the different stages of pregnancy. It also helps to know how pregnancy may affect your emotions and feelings...](#)

Fertility issues and options

- [Adoption](#)

[Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family...](#)

- [Surrogacy](#)

[Surrogacy is a form of assisted reproductive treatment \(ART\) in which a woman carries a child within her uterus on behalf of another person or couple...](#)

- [If you want to get pregnant, timing is everything](#)

[If you are trying for a baby, to increase your chances of conceiving, it helps to know when you are at your most fertile, and when is the best time to have sex...](#)

- [Abortion](#)

[All women should have access to accurate information about abortion so they can make their own informed decisions...](#)

- [Age and fertility](#)

[Age affects the fertility of both men and women, and is the single biggest factor affecting a woman's chance to conceive and have a healthy baby...](#)

- [Infertility in men](#)

[A couple isn't suspected of fertility problems until they have tried and failed to conceive for one year...](#)

- [Infertility in women](#)

[The odds of a young fertile couple conceiving by having sexual intercourse around the time of ovulation are approximately one in five every month...](#)

- [Weight, fertility and pregnancy health](#)

[Compared with women in the healthy weight range, women who are carrying extra weight are less likely to conceive...](#)

Keeping healthy during pregnancy

- [Pregnancy - morning sickness](#)

[Morning sickness is typically at its worst early in the day but it can strike at any point during the day or night...](#)

- [Postnatal exercise - sample workout](#)

[Make sure your abdominal muscles have healed before you do any vigorous tummy exercises, such as crunches...](#)

- [Healthy eating during pregnancy - tucker talk tips](#)

[Some foods should be avoided during pregnancy as they carry bacteria that could harm your unborn baby...](#)

- [Postnatal exercise](#)

[Always consult with your doctor or midwife before starting any postnatal exercise program...](#)

- [Pregnancy and your mental health](#)

[Finding out you are pregnant can be a very exciting time. But it can also make you feel uncomfortable, unwell, worried and make you wonder how you are going to cope. And it doesn't stop when the baby...](#)

- [Pregnancy and teeth](#)

[It's important to look after your teeth and gums when you're pregnant, as gum disease can affect your baby...](#)

- [Tests, scans and checks - pregnancy and labour](#)

[Tests can confirm your pregnancy and also monitor your baby's development in the womb...](#)

- [Alcohol and pregnancy](#)

[There's no safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy. It's safest to not drink at all during pregnancy, when trying to conceive, and while breastfeeding...](#)

- [Pregnancy and smoking](#)

[Smoking while pregnant exposes a woman and her unborn child to an increased risk of health problems...](#)

- [Immunisation and pregnancy](#)

[Immunisation can protect a woman and her unborn baby against many infectious diseases...](#)

- [Folate for pregnant women](#)

[Even women who aren't planning to have a baby should increase their folate intake in case of unplanned pregnancy...](#)

- [Pregnancy and exercise](#)

[Unless you have complications, you should be able to exercise throughout your pregnancy...](#)

- [Pelvic floor](#)

[Pelvic floor exercises are designed to improve muscle tone and prevent the need for corrective surgery...](#)

- [Pregnancy and diet](#)

[Good nutrition during pregnancy can help to keep you and your developing baby healthy...](#)

- [Pregnancy and travel](#)

[Travelling to developing nations is not encouraged during pregnancy, due to the risk of disease and the standard of medical facilities...](#)

Health concerns during pregnancy

- [Miscarriage and Stillbirth - Coming to terms \(video\)](#)

- [Pregnancy - bleeding problems](#)

[Bleeding from the vagina in early pregnancy happens in almost one in four pregnancies...](#)

- [Newborn bloodspot screening \(video\)](#)

[Every newborn baby in Australia is offered a newborn bloodspot screening test to identify those at risk for rare, but serious, medical conditions including PKU, hypothyroidism and cystic fibrosis...](#)

- [Placenta previa](#)

[Placenta previa means the placenta has implanted at the bottom of the uterus, over the cervix or close by...](#)

- [Placental abruption](#)

[Placental abruption means the placenta has detached from the wall of the uterus, starving the baby of oxygen and nutrients...](#)

- [Pregnancy - pre-eclampsia](#)

[There is no evidence that pre-eclampsia is caused by emotional stress, working too hard or not getting enough rest...](#)

- [Lupus and pregnancy](#)

[Lupus can be controlled with medications, so the majority of affected women are able to have children...](#)

- [HIV and women – having children](#)

[Women living with human immunodeficiency virus \(HIV\), or women whose partner is HIV-positive, may wish to have children but feel concerned about the risk of transmission of the virus to themselves \(if...](#)

- [Alcohol and pregnancy](#)

[There's no safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy. It's safest to not drink at all during pregnancy, when trying to conceive, and while breastfeeding...](#)

- [Pregnancy and smoking](#)

[Smoking while pregnant exposes a woman and her unborn child to an increased risk of health problems...](#)

- [Pregnancy - obstetric emergencies](#)

[An obstetric emergency may arise when a woman is pregnant, or during her delivery. In this case, extra care is needed. A woman may need a lot of tests and treatments, and extended hospital stays. She...](#)

- [Postnatal depression \(PND\)](#)

[Postnatal depression can happen either a few days or weeks after the birth, with a slow or sudden onset...](#)

- [Molar pregnancy](#)

[Most molar pregnancies are diagnosed when bleeding early in pregnancy prompts an ultrasound scan...](#)

- [Miscarriage](#)

[A range of feelings is normal after a miscarriage, and they often linger for some time...](#)

- [Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder \(FASD\)](#)

[The World Health Organization recommends that pregnant women should avoid alcohol...](#)

- [Asthma - pregnancy and breastfeeding](#)

[Pregnant women with asthma need to continue to take their asthma medication as it is important to the health of both mother and baby that the mother's asthma is well managed...](#)

- [Pregnancy and diet](#)

[Good nutrition during pregnancy can help to keep you and your developing baby healthy...](#)

- [Birth defects explained](#)

[The cause of birth defects is often unknown, speak to your GP if you are at increased risk of having a baby with a congenital anomaly...](#)

- [Ectopic pregnancy](#)

[Ectopic pregnancy is caused by a fertilised egg not being able to move through the fallopian tube...](#)

- [Diabetes - gestational](#)

[Gestational diabetes is diabetes that occurs during pregnancy and usually disappears when the pregnancy is over...](#)

Preparing for birth

- [Pregnancy - care choices](#)

[It's very important for you and your baby to be looked after from the start of your pregnancy until after the birth of your baby...](#)

- [Pregnancy – labour](#)

[Labour is divided into three stages. The first stage is dilation of the cervix from 0 to 10 cm, the second stage is birth of the baby, and the third stage is delivery of the placenta. Labour typically...](#)

- [Pregnancy - premature labour](#)

[Sometimes, babies arrive early. It's important to recognise premature labour, in case you and your baby need medical care...](#)

- [Pregnancy - packing for hospital](#)

[Packing for hospital is an exciting part of preparing for the birth of your baby...](#)

- [Planning for labour and birth](#)

[Some of the signs and symptoms of going into labour may include period-like cramps, backache, diarrhoea and contractions...](#)

- [Twins - identical and fraternal](#)

[Multiple births are more common due to the advancing average age of mothers and the rise in assisted reproductive techniques...](#)

Preparing for a newborn

- [Breastfeeding - the first days](#)

[Let your baby feed as much as they want in the first few days to help establish good breastfeeding patterns...](#)

- [Breastfeeding - when to start](#)

[Breastfeeding within the first hour after birth allows your baby to behave instinctively and breastfeed with little intervention...](#)

- [Alcohol and pregnancy](#)
[There's no safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy. It's safest to not drink at all during pregnancy, when trying to conceive, and while breastfeeding...](#)
- [Vitamin K and newborn babies](#)
[With low levels of vitamin K, some babies can have severe bleeding into the brain, causing significant brain damage...](#)
- [Postnatal depression \(PND\)](#)
[Postnatal depression can happen either a few days or weeks after the birth, with a slow or sudden onset...](#)
- [Baby furniture - safety tips](#)
[Even if your baby furniture meets every safety standard and recommendation, your child still needs close supervision...](#)
- [Newborn bloodspot screening](#)
[Every newborn baby in Australia is offered a newborn bloodspot screening test to identify those at risk of rare, but serious, medical conditions...](#)

Related Information

- [Ectopic pregnancy](#)
Ectopic pregnancy is caused by a fertilised egg not being able to move through the fallopian tube...
- [Placenta previa](#)
Placenta previa means the placenta has implanted at the bottom of the uterus, over the cervix or close by...
- [Placental abruption](#)
Placental abruption means the placenta has detached from the wall of the uterus, starving the baby of oxygen and nutrients...
- [Pregnancy - pre-eclampsia](#)
There is no evidence that pre-eclampsia is caused by emotional stress, working too hard or not getting enough rest...
- [Molar pregnancy](#)
Most molar pregnancies are diagnosed when bleeding early in pregnancy prompts an ultrasound scan...

[Home](#)

Related information on other websites

- [Kidshealth](#)
- [MedlinePlus](#)

Content Partner

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by: Royal Women's Hospital



Last updated: July 2018

Content on this website is provided for information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not in any way endorse or support such therapy, service, product or treatment and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional. The information and materials contained on this website are not intended to constitute a comprehensive guide concerning all aspects of the therapy, product or treatment described on the website. All users are urged to always seek advice from a registered health care professional for diagnosis and answers to their medical questions and to ascertain whether the particular therapy, service, product or treatment described on the website is suitable in their circumstances. The State of Victoria and the Department of Health & Human Services shall not bear any liability for reliance by any user on the materials contained on this website.



betterhealth.vic.gov.au



NURSE-ON-CALL

Provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse. Call 1300 60 60 24

[NURSE-ON-CALL](#)

Service Search

Service Search

Find services near you

Service:

Location:

Type a minimum of three characters then press UP or DOWN on the keyboard to navigate the autocompleted search results

[Use my location](#)

Recent Activity

16 people have watched a video today

- **[Health topics](#)**

- [Conditions and treatments](#)
- [Healthy living](#)
- [Services and support](#)
-

- **[Explore](#)**

- [Recipes](#)
- [Healthy pantry](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Consumer medicine information](#)
- [Multilingual health information - Health Translations Directory](#)

- **[About](#)**

- [About us](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- [Content partners](#)
- [Privacy](#)
- [Terms of use](#)
- [Contact us](#)

- **[Connect with us](#)**

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)

Page last reviewed: 02 Nov 2016

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au:443/health/healthyliving/pregnancy-obstetric-emergencies>

- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au:443/about/privacy>
[Privacy Statement](#)
- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au:443/about/terms-of-use>
[Copyright Notice](#)
- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au:443/about/terms-of-use>
[Disclaimer Notice](#)

This web site is managed and authorised by the Department of Health & Human Services, State Government of Victoria, Australia

© Copyright State of Victoria 2018.

[Back to Top](#)

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:

Royal Women's Hospital

Content on this website is provided for information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not in any way endorse or support such therapy, service, product or treatment and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional. The information and materials contained on this website are not intended to constitute a comprehensive guide concerning all aspects of the therapy, product or treatment described on the website. All users are urged to always seek advice from a registered health care professional for diagnosis and answers to their medical questions and to ascertain whether the particular therapy, service, product or treatment described on the website is suitable in their circumstances. The State of Victoria and the Department of Health & Human Services shall not bear any liability for reliance by any user on the materials contained on this website.

For the latest updates and more information, visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Copyright © 1999/2019 State of Victoria. Reproduced from the Better Health Channel (www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) at no cost with permission of the Victorian Minister for Health. Unauthorised reproduction and other uses comprised in the copyright are prohibited without permission.