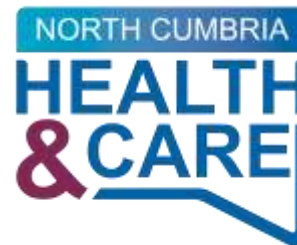


Starting Well in North Cumbria

"Making Every Conversation Count"

Spacing between pregnancies



<p>Before and after pregnancy</p>	<p>The best advice we can give you is to try and leave a gap of between 18 and 36 months between giving birth to your previous child and becoming pregnant again. Talk to your GP or Health Visitor about the contraception options available to you to help plan your pregnancies.</p> <p>From looking at the health of thousands of babies, we know that there is an increased risk of giving birth to your baby early (prematurely) if there is a short gap (of less than 18 months) between a mum giving birth and getting pregnant again.</p> <p>Most babies born soon after their older brothers and sisters will be healthy, but we want you and your family to be aware of this potential risk so you can make an informed decision about future pregnancies and use of contraception.</p> <p>There are other benefits as well of leaving a gap of at least 18 months between your pregnancies. It will give your body time to heal, give you and your partner time to bond with your current baby and help you adjust to becoming parents.</p> <p>Parents may find it less stressful to care for one young child at a time. It can also help you to manage your finances better, plan childcare and make arrangements for returning to work.</p>
<p>During pregnancy</p>	<p>The best advice that we can give to you is to think about any contraception you wish to use following the birth of your child and plan for this in plenty of time.</p> <p>Contraception can help you space pregnancies and prevent unplanned pregnancies. We understand that this is probably not a priority for you when you are pregnant, but once your baby is born, it can be much harder to plan for and access contraception, so it's good to be prepared.</p> <p>Your GP or midwife can offer you advice.</p>
<p><i>"Our vision is for all families in North Cumbria to be valued, happy and healthy. We all want the very best for our families"</i></p>	

Further Information on: Safe Spacing between pregnancies

What is spacing?	'Spacing' between pregnancies refers to the time between giving birth to your baby and becoming pregnant again with your next.
What is safe spacing between pregnancies?	From studying the health of thousands of babies and looking at how long after their older brothers and sisters they were born, we know that the risk of premature birth is lowest when a gap of between 18 and 36 months is left between giving birth and becoming pregnant again.
What are the benefits of safe spacing between pregnancies?	<p>The benefits to you and your partner can include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gives your body time to heal and be healthy before the next pregnancy • allows you time to breastfeed, eat healthily and manage your weight • gives you time to concentrate on other aspects of your wellbeing e.g. start a regular exercise routine, give up smoking and manage stress • gives you and your partner time to bond with your current baby and adjust to becoming parents • allows time for families to better manage their finances, childcare and work arrangements
What are the risks of unsafe spacing between pregnancies?	<p>The main risk of leaving a short space of time between giving birth and becoming pregnant again is your second baby being born too early (prematurely). There are some other risks that may be associated with leaving a gap of less than 18 months between pregnancies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the baby being smaller than it should be for its stage in development • autism in the second born child • other complications, such as miscarriage and pre-eclampsia
What is pre-eclampsia?	<p>Pre-eclampsia is a condition that affects some pregnant women, usually during the second half of pregnancy (from around 20 weeks) or soon after their baby is delivered. Early signs of pre-eclampsia include having high blood pressure (hypertension) and protein in your wee (proteinuria).</p> <p>It's unlikely that you'll notice these signs, but don't worry, your blood pressure and wee will be checked at every appointment with the midwife whilst you are pregnant.</p>
What can partners and wider family do to help with spacing?	<p>Partners can offer positive support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging discussion about contraception (birth control) during pregnancy and after the baby is born • Taking equal responsibility for contraception • Respecting a mum's thoughts and wishes about when to have sex again following birth <p>Remember, it is not just the responsibility of the mum to plan current and future pregnancies.</p>
What about if I've experienced a miscarriage?	<p>Speak to your healthcare professional for more advice, but there is good evidence that there is actually a lower risk of miscarriage in women who conceive within the first 6 months after miscarriage.</p> <p>In most cases, the best time to try is when you and your partner feel physically recovered and emotionally ready to embark on another pregnancy.</p>
Links to further information and advice:	<p>Before Pregnancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS guide to 'Planning Your Pregnancy' • Tommy's 'Are you Ready' Planning for Pregnancy Tool <p>During Pregnancy and After Pregnancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Health Services in Cumbria (including contraception) • NHS Contraception Guide