



Stillbirths happen for many reasons, but there are some ways to reduce the risk in pregnancy

This information is from www.saferpregnancy.org.uk, Sands' website for pregnant women.

The website has more advice, links to national guidelines on the care women should receive, and helpful films

Straight-talking good advice
for pregnant women

Go to all antenatal appointments so the right tests and measurements are done.

Have the seasonal flu jab – it's free, and safe to have at any stage of pregnancy.

Swap unhealthy foods for healthier options and keep active. Pregnancy isn't the time for a weight-loss diet, but there's no need to put on extra kilos in pregnancy if already overweight.

Stop smoking – the sooner the better. A midwife, GP or pharmacist can advise, and 'stop smoking' programmes are available. Nicotine replacement therapy such as patches and gum can help. Using an e-cigarette isn't completely risk free, but it's much safer than continuing to smoke.

Cut out alcohol. The safest way to ensure a baby is not damaged by alcohol is to not drink during pregnancy.

Avoid contact with people who have infectious illnesses, including diarrhoea, sickness and childhood illnesses, such as chickenpox or parvovirus (slapped cheek).

Be strict about good hygiene at home and out and about (for example, washing hands).

Foods to avoid while pregnant are listed on NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/foods-to-avoid-pregnant.aspx).

Contact the nearest maternity unit straight away if:

- **baby's movements have reduced, slowed down or changed, or**
- **there's bleeding from the vagina, or watery, clear or coloured discharge from the vagina that seems abnormal, or**
- **there are signs of pre-eclampsia** (obvious swelling; severe headache that won't go away, sometimes with vomiting; problems with vision; and severe pain just below the ribs in the middle of the abdomen).

Sands' pregnancy site, www.saferpregnancy.org.uk, has more information about having a safer pregnancy, and signposts national guidelines on the care women should receive



