

Pregnancy

Think you might be pregnant?

Home pregnancy test kits can be purchased from **chemists and most supermarkets**, and range in price from \$5 to \$10. It is safe to do a pregnancy test at any time, but results will be most accurate if you wait until your period is due, or 2-3 weeks after possible conception.

If the test indicates that you may be pregnant, or if you have any concern about the result of the test, you should see a doctor. A doctor will conduct a urine or blood test to confirm whether or not you are pregnant, and inform you about your options. You may also choose to see a doctor, and skip the home pregnancy test altogether.

Some people prefer to contact a [women's health centre](#) or [Family Planning clinic](#) for counselling with an appropriately qualified practitioner. A counsellor can help you make the right pregnancy decisions for you.

Know your options

1. If you want to continue your pregnancy

If you are pregnant and you decide to continue your pregnancy:

- seek initial advice and support from your GP, [women's health centre](#), or other service provider
- your GP can refer you to a hospital near where you live – this may be a private or public hospital
- a public hospital's labour ward will provide professional attention by midwives, and an obstetrician will be on hand if necessary
- some public hospitals have birthing centres which are run by midwives and will often have bigger baths and beds than in the regular labour ward
- you can contract a private midwife for your care during pregnancy, but be aware of the costs
- if you would prefer to give birth at home, a private midwife can be very expensive, though some insurers offer a rebate for midwifery services

- while you are receiving pregnancy care it is important that you feel comfortable asking questions of the practitioner who is caring for you (whether gynaecologist, midwife, or your local GP)
- read more information on [healthcare for international students](#)

2. Taking emergency contraceptives/morning after pill

There are three types of emergency contraception available in Australia:

1. the **levonorgestrel** emergency contraceptive pill (brand names include Postinor-1, Postinor-2, Postrelle -1, Postella-1, NorLevo, NorLevo-1, Levonelle-1 and Levonelle-2): should be taken within **72 hours (3 days) after unprotected sex**
2. the **ulipristal acetate** emergency contraceptive pill – it is called **EllaOne**: should be taken within **120 hours (5 days) after unprotected sex**
3. a **copper intrauterine device (IUD)** - inserted within 5 days of unprotected sex by a trained doctor or nurse

Emergency contraceptive pills can be obtained from a chemist **without a prescription**. Emergency contraception is also available at [Family Planning NSW clinics](#) and some GPs. For a copper IUD, contact your nearest [Family Planning NSW clinic](#) or [Family Planning NSW Talkline](#) to get information about having an insertion within the 5-day timeframe.

It is important to remember:

- emergency contraceptive pills must be taken as soon as possible. They will work better **the sooner you take them**
- some medications can reduce how well the emergency contraceptive pill works, **be sure to discuss any medications you are already taking** with your pharmacist or doctor
- the emergency contraceptive pill will not protect against pregnancy **if you have unprotected sex again** in the same menstrual cycle
- emergency contraception **does not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)**

[More detailed information](#) on emergency contraceptives (and some [information in Chinese](#)).

3. Termination of pregnancy / abortion

If you are pregnant and don't want to continue the pregnancy, you could consider terminating the pregnancy, also known as abortion. Termination of

pregnancy is a safe and common medical procedure used to end pregnancy through surgical intervention or by taking medication.

There are two ways an abortion can be done: a [surgical abortion or a medical abortion](#). A medical abortion may also be organized over the phone, this is known as a [medical abortion by phone](#) or a tele-abortion.

A termination of pregnancy is legal in NSW under certain circumstances as long as it's performed by a registered doctor. [More information, and find a clinic](#).

Hospitals, birthing centres and home births

If you have any complications with your labour, where you require an obstetrician or want pain relief (e.g. gas or epidural), a birthing centre may not be suitable for you. If you are already at the hospital birthing centre and you experience complications, you may be transferred to the labour ward.

A few public hospitals offer **Medicare-funded homebirth** for low-risk pregnancies, though places are very limited. For more information on private and public hospitals, birthing centres and home births, [visit the Pregnancy Birth & Beyond](#) website.

Is your partner pregnant?

It is normal to experience a range of emotions. It is okay to feel confused, especially if it was not expected and/or is your first time. [Family Planning NSW](#) have a useful online resource to assist you to understand pregnancy and support for your partner. You can also contact the Family Planning NSW Talkline on **1300 658 886**.

What are the costs of having a baby?

Australian residents and others who are eligible for Medicare will have their pregnancy and birthing costs covered or mostly covered if they choose to use public hospitals and services. If you are an international student, you will need to check whether your OSHC covers pregnancy. If you are not covered for pregnancy, giving birth in Australia will be very expensive.

Decisions around pregnancy care

There are many issues that can come up during a pregnancy. It can be surprising how small things can happen during labour and have an impact on you. Do as much planning as you can before labour. Don't be afraid to ask

your doctor or nurse for information to be broken into small amounts, so that you can have time to think. Ideally you should be able to trust yourself and your own knowledge of yourself. A common decision to make beforehand is whether or not to use pain relief. Some people choose to have a completely chemical free delivery, with no needles, but many choose pain-relieving medication during labour. Your decision is your right.

Disclaimer

This information is current as at December 2019 and where it includes legal information is intended as a guide to the law as it applies to people who live in or are affected by the law as it applies in NSW. It does not constitute legal advice.