



LONDON BOROUGH OF
MERTON



MATERNITY / MIDWIFERY



MATERNITY

Midwives are educated to degree level in the UK and are regulated by the nurses and midwifery council. Midwifery is associated with improved quality of care and sustained reductions in maternal and newborn mortality.

All parents and newborns have a right to a quality of care that enables a positive childbirth experience that includes respect and dignity, a companion of choice, clear communication by maternity staff, pain relief strategies, mobility in labour and birth position of choice.



MATERNITY TEAM IN MERTON

Merton does not have a maternity hospital. Therefore, Merton residents can choose a neighbouring borough's maternity hospital - St George's, Kingston, Croydon or St. Helier.

Referrals to the maternity team at St Georges, Kingston, Croydon and St. Helier can be completed by the GP or via an online self-referral form.

St Georges - [Pregnancy Pre-Registration / Self-Referral Form](#)

Kington – [Maternity referral form](#)

Croydon - [Antenatal self-referral form](#)

St. Helier - [Pregnancy self-referral form](#)

Referrals are recommended before 7 weeks of pregnancy. Once the referral has been processed, an appointment with a midwife will be arranged as well as appointments for a blood test and an ultrasound scan.



ANTENATAL CARE

Most women follow a planned midwifery care schedule which includes appointments with a midwife throughout the pregnancy and ultrasound scan appointments:

- 8-12 weeks: booking appointment with midwife
- 11-14 weeks: first ultrasound scan (Nuchal Scan)
- 16 weeks: midwife appointment
- 18-21 weeks: second ultrasound scan (Anomaly Scan)
- 25 weeks: midwife appointment if first-time parent
- 28 weeks: midwife appointment

- 31 weeks: midwife appointment if first-time parent
- 34 weeks: midwife appointment
- 36 weeks: third ultrasound scan (Growth Scan) if required
- 38 weeks: midwife appointment
- 40 weeks: midwife appointment if first-time parent
- 41 weeks: midwife appointment

At each appointment, the baby's growth and movements will be assessed to ensure good growth and development, along with check-ups on general wellbeing. Some women may need to see a doctor instead of a midwife if they have complications.

For women with more complicated pregnancies, referrals can be made to specialist teams for further advice, tests and ultrasounds. This could include, raised blood pressure, Itching in pregnancy, vaginal bleeding, abdominal pain, fetal growth problems or suspected fetal abnormality. All hospitals also have specialist teams in mental health, drug and alcohol, teenage pregnancy and domestic abuse.



MATERNITY TEAM – ST GEORGES

For pregnancies less than 14 weeks where there are concerns, for example, abdominal pain or vaginal bleeding, the Early Pregnancy Answerphone Service is available to provide information and advice. 020 8725 0093 (Monday – Saturday)

The Early Pregnancy Unit (EPU) offers a walk-in service where women who are less than 14 weeks pregnant can come if they are concerned about their pregnancy. The unit is open Monday – Friday 8:30am – 11am and Saturdays for emergencies only.

For pregnancies more than 14 weeks where there are concerns (during pregnancy, labour or in the 6 weeks after birth) the St George's Maternity Helpline is available to offer advice, reassurance, and clinical support. 020 8725 2777 (Monday – Sunday)

Further information can be found at [St Georges maternity team](#)





MATERNITY TEAM – KINGSTON

For pregnancies less than 18 weeks where there are concerns, for example, abdominal pain or vaginal bleeding, the GP will be able to provide information and advice. If it is an emergency, women should attend their local emergency department.

For pregnancies more than 18 weeks where there are concerns, the maternity helpline is available to offer advice, reassurance, and clinical support 0208 934 2802. If required, women may be asked to attend the Day Assessment centre for an appointment which is open from Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm, Saturday 8am – 4pm (020 8934 2358).

Further information can be found at [Kingston Maternity](#)





MATERNITY TEAM – CROYDEN

For pregnancies less than 16 weeks where there are concerns, for example, abdominal pain or vaginal bleeding, the Early Pregnancy Unit triage team will be able to provide information and advice. 0208 401 3310 (9am – 1pm, Monday to Friday). If it is an emergency, women should call 111 or attend their local emergency department.

For pregnancies more than 16 weeks where there are concerns, the Antenatal clinic Midwives can be contacted for advice. 020 8401 3459/3470.

To discuss/change antenatal appointments the Antenatal booking centre can be contacted:
020 8401 3000 ext 4202

Further information can be found at [Croydon Maternity Services](#)





MATERNITY TEAM – ST HELIER

For pregnancies less than 20 weeks where there are concerns, for example, abdominal pain or vaginal bleeding, the Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit at St Helier hospital will be able to offer advice and schedule appointments. Outside of the unit's open hours, there is a 24-hour Pregnancy Advice Line: 030 0123 5473

St Helier Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit (EPAU)

Open Monday to Friday: 9am -12 noon (by appointment only) - 020 8296 2882

For pregnancies more than 20 weeks where there are concerns, the Maternity Assessment Unit (MATAU) can be contacted for advice and to schedule appointments.

St Helier Maternity Assessment Unit - Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm. 020 8296 2542

Further information can be found at [Epsom and St Helier Antenatal Care](#)





ANTENATAL CLASSES

Antenatal classes help parents prepare for their baby's birth along with giving them confidence and information. Parents will learn how to look after and feed their baby, stay healthy during pregnancy and make a birth plan - considering the different arrangements for labour and birth and the choices available.

Antenatal classes are also a good way for parents to meet other expecting parents. These friendships can become part of the support network during the first few months after birth.

Most antenatal classes start around 8 to 10 weeks before the baby is due, around 30 to 32 weeks pregnant.

St Georges, Croydon, Kingston and St. Helier hospitals all provide antenatal information and sessions for parents which may be face to face or online.

Parents can also search for private and local antenatal classes through the [NHS website](#)



FEAR OF BIRTH/BIRTH TRAUMA

Research suggests that about 4% of women who give birth go on to develop postnatal PTSD, or birth trauma. That works out at about 30,000 new cases every year in the UK.

Symptoms of birth trauma (postnatal PTSD):

- Re-experiencing the traumatic event through flashbacks, nightmares or intrusive memories.
- Avoiding anything that reminds you of the trauma. This can include avoiding meeting other women with new babies.
- Feeling hypervigilant: this means that you are constantly alert, irritable and jumpy.
- Feeling low and unhappy (“negative cognition” in the medical jargon).



The [Birth Trauma Association](#) provides online / peer support to parents who are experiencing birth trauma



[Jigsaw4u](#) provides loss and trauma support to children, young people and families



St George's and St Helier's hospitals both provide birth reflective support and birth options clinics



NEONATAL SERVICES

St George's, Kingston, Croydon and St. Helier provide a special care baby unit if required. However, babies who need extra neonatal support will be transferred to St George's neonatal intensive care unit.

Some babies will need special care after birth, and this can be provided by the special care/neonatal teams.

Babies may be admitted to special care/ neonatal care for a number of reasons, including:

- Being born early (premature)
- Being small and having a low birth weight
- Having an infection
- Having jaundice
- Had a difficult birth
- Waiting for or recovering from complex surgery

Having a baby in neonatal care can be worrying, but the staff on the special care / neonatal ward will support the parents and provide all the information needed.



POSTNATAL

Following discharge from the hospital, the care is handed over to the community midwifery team. The catchment area of the home postcode usually determines which hospital will be responsible for the postnatal care.

A member of the community maternity team will usually contact within 24 hours of discharge to check the mother and baby. The team will agree to an individualised plan of care for the first 10-14 days, but if extra support is required, the community maternity team may visit for up to 28 days after the birth.

Health visitors usually take over infant postnatal care from around day 10-14.

St George's Maternity helpline - 020 8725 2777

Croydon Midwifery Community Services - 0208 401 3000 ext 5472

Kingston Community Midwifery team - 0208 934 2626.

St Helier postnatal care – 01372 735206



HOME START MERTON



Home-Start Merton enables families experiencing stress or difficulties to meet the needs of their children from conception to five years old.

Merton Home-Start offers:

Core Service

Trained parent volunteers offer regular one to one support, friendship, and practical help to families and children under 5, for around 2 hours a week, in their own homes, helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown whilst emphasising the pleasures of family life.

Perinatal Service

Perinatal service (Bumps to babies) is for families who are currently supported by the specialist Perinatal Teams at St Georges' Hospital, St Helier Hospital and Springfield hospital and Health Visitors. For pregnant and new parents with low level mental ill health.





HOME START MERTON



Group Support

Weekly groups for parents and children who are supported by Home-Start Merton.

Home-Start's Little Stars Group: This is a safe environment which encourages socialisation, peer support, activities, and a lunch. This group is for parents and their little ones from pregnancy up to 5 years old. (11am – 1pm Wednesdays)

Happy Steps Group: This is a safe environment which encourages socialisation, peer support, activities for pregnant parents and children up to 5 years old. (11am – 1pm Thursdays)

Counselling

Counselling is offered to parents currently supported by Home-Start Merton. Parents struggling with their wellbeing are offered one hour weekly sessions for 8 weeks.

Self-referrals are accepted by calling 0208 646 6044 or referrals from professionals via the [Referral Form](#)



FURTHER SUPPORT



[Maternity exemption certificates](#)

A maternity exemption certificate entitles pregnant women to free NHS prescriptions up until 12 months after the birth of their baby. The certificate also entitles free NHS dental treatment during pregnancy. The GP, midwife or health visitor can complete the application.



[Sure Start Maternity Grant](#)

Sure Start Maternity Grant is a one-off payment of £500 to help towards the costs of having a child. Parents usually qualify for the grant if they are expecting their first child, or expecting a multiple birth (such as twins) and have children already and are claiming benefits such as universal credit or income support.



[Neighbourhood Doulas](#)

Neighbourhood Doula available for Merton residents is a free, fully funded service providing continuity support through pregnancy, birth preparation, labour and the postpartum period to those with no birth partner. Many service users experience trauma and multiple disadvantages that can include, domestic violence, trafficking and exploitation. office@neighbourhooddoulas.org



FURTHER SUPPORT



[Screening tests](#)

The NHS website provides information about the different screening tests that will be offered during and after pregnancy.



[DadPad](#)

Developed with the NHS, the DadPad gives new dads and dads-to-be the knowledge and practical skills necessary to support themselves and their partner, so that babies get the best possible start in life.



[Maternity Action](#)

Maternity Action is the UK's maternity rights charity dedicated to promoting, protecting and enhancing the rights of all pregnant women, new mothers and their families to employment, social security and health care. Advice on rights at work and benefits - 0808 802 0057



[Me, You & Baby
Too](#)

Me, You and Baby Too is an online resource for expectant and new parents to help them think about how their relationship will change and be different and how they can support each other around those changes.




MERTON LOCAL DIRECTORIES

Merton Local Directories are great resources to keep up to date with activities and services available for children, young people and adults in Merton.

[Merton Local Directories](#)

Welcome to Merton Local Directories

Support, services, advice and things to do




Family Services Directory

Support and information for expectant parents and families with children and young people aged 0-19.

- [Activities and leisure](#)
- [Childcare and education](#)
- [Community groups and places](#)
- [Family support and parenting](#)
- [Health and wellbeing](#)
- [Information, advice and support](#)

[See more](#)




SEND Local Offer

Support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged 0-25.

- [Activities and leisure](#)
- [Education and childcare](#)
- [Employment and training](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Preparing for adulthood](#)
- [Social care](#)

[See more](#)




Young Merton

Support for care leavers moving into adulthood and independent living aged 16-25.

- [Education and learning](#)
- [Have a say. Get involved](#)
- [Keeping safe and healthy](#)
- [Local offer for care leavers](#)
- [Things to do](#)
- [Work, money and living](#)

[See more](#)




Adult Support Services Directory

Support for adults on employment, education, health, housing, financial advice and things to do in the community.

- [Activities and leisure](#)
- [Health and wellbeing](#)
- [Housing matters](#)
- [How to access help](#)
- [Keeping safe](#)
- [Money matters](#)

[See more](#)



Family Hubs Directory

Connecting families and young people with access to help, when and where they need it.

- [Family Voice](#)
- [Home life, finances and staying safe](#)
- [Keeping your family healthy](#)
- [Play, youth and family learning](#)
- [SEND support \(Special educational needs and disabilities\)](#)
- [Start for Life](#)

[See more](#)



FURTHER SUPPORT

Families can receive further information on the maternity services available through the Family Information Support Hubs (FISH).

FISH provides parents/carers with information, support and guidance on all aspects of family life.

FISH sessions take place Monday – Friday with FREE face-to-face or telephone appointments available. Appointments can be booked via [Eventbrite](#) either by a parent/carer or a practitioner on their behalf.

Or parents/carers can come along to one of the FISH drop-in sessions (no appointment needed):

Family Hub at Church Rd Children Centre – Mondays, 1.30pm-4.30pm

Family Hub at Acacia Children Centre – Wednesdays, 9.00am-12.00pm

