

- **Swelling** - Swelling of the ankles, fingers, face and hands is also called oedema and happens because the body holds more fluid in pregnancy (a certain amount is normal in later pregnancy).
- **Varicose veins** - These are swollen veins, usually in the legs, but sometimes in the vulva (vaginal opening) too. They may cause aching and sometimes itching. Support tights can help. Avoid standing for long periods and try to rest with your legs up when you can. (Always tell your midwife or GP if you notice any hot, red or painful areas in your legs or vulva.)

Important information

In the absence of a midwife you should immediately contact your GP or NHS24 if you experience a serious problem, including the following:

- **Vaginal bleeding** - You should get medical advice straight away if you are bleeding from the vagina in pregnancy.
- **Severe abdominal pain** – Seek immediate medical advice if you experience severe abdominal pain.
- **Ruptured membranes** (breaking of the waters)
- **Severe oedema/headaches or visual disturbance.**
- **If, for any other reason, you think you may be in labour.**

Further Information

Uist Midwife

Within normal working hours (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm):
01870 603633

Maternity Department

Western Isles Hospital, MacAulay Road,
Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2AF
Tel. 01851 708301

NHS24

Tel. 111

Head of Midwifery, NHS Western Isles

Catherine MacDonald, tel. 0791 911 1634

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website feedback section at:
www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk or share your story at:
www.careopinion.org.uk or 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.

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Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

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Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar
NHS Western Isles

Maternity Services

Midwifery Cover in Uist



Useful information for parents-to-be

This information leaflet has been produced for pregnant women in Uist, so that you are aware of who to contact in an emergency situation and who to contact about any concerns or questions.

It also contains information about symptoms that you may be experiencing and the symptoms that are common during pregnancy, as well as examples of less common problems (where you should seek immediate medical advice).

Please note that maternity services have experienced some difficulty in terms of recruiting midwives to the area. We do employ a full-time midwife who is available from the hours of 9am-5pm, and who will be on-call Saturday and Sunday, 9am-5pm. There will be no midwife on-call from 5pm-9am but women needing advice can contact the Maternity Department in Stornoway outwith those times. Please do not contact your local midwife by outwith her working hours, or unnecessarily over the weekend.

Who do I contact with questions or concerns?

During normal working hours

If you have a general pregnancy-related concern or question, where possible, contact your midwife within normal working hours (9am-5pm), Monday to Friday on 01870 603633.

Outwith normal working hours

We would like to take this opportunity to remind pregnant women to refrain from contacting their midwife out of hours.

As there is no on-call midwifery service available on Uist beyond 5pm we would advise women to call:

- Maternity Dept in Stornoway, tel. 01851 708301
- [Ready, Steady, Baby](#) via NHS Inform
- or in an emergency dial 999

Post-natal period

The post-natal period is up to 28 days post delivery. Appropriate arrangements for routine visits will be arranged by the midwife. The majority of women only require visits from delivery to days 10-14, and are then discharged to the local Health Visitor.

Contact can be made with the midwife in the usual way as for antenatal period. Outwith normal working hours, you should call the numbers detailed above.

Non pregnancy-related issues

If your issue is not related to your pregnancy, you should contact your GP during business hours; or NHS24, either in-hours or out-of-hours.

Common symptoms during pregnancy

There are a number of minor problems which can affect you from around week 20 of your pregnancy (which are often mild and short lived). Please feel free to discuss these with your midwife at an appointment, or contact her during normal working hours. These include:

- **Backache** - There is extra strain on your joints and hips as you put on more weight and get closer to the birth. Gentle exercise and taking care while lifting can make a big difference.

- **Bleeding gums** - During pregnancy, due to hormonal effects, even a small build-up of plaque can cause irritation to the gums. This is called 'pregnancy gingivitis'. Brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and regular flossing can help prevent gingivitis.
- **Constipation** – This can be a problem in pregnancy due to all the changes taking place in your body and new hormones rushing around. Your diet can be the best way to tackle constipation; eat plenty of fibre-rich food and make sure you are getting enough fluids.
- **Continued sickness** – Tips on how to reduce sickness are available on the website: www.nhsinform.scot/ready-steady-baby
- **Cystitis** - This is a urine infection which may cause a burning sensation when you pee and make you feel you need to pass urine all the time – but these symptoms can often be felt in pregnancy anyway. If you have symptoms like this, discuss them with your midwife during your appointment. You may be given a course of safe antibiotics if there is an infection.
- **Heartburn** - This is more common in later pregnancy. Strong tea or coffee, pure fruit juice, spicy and fatty foods can make it feel worse. Take your time when you eat.
- **Piles or haemorrhoids** - These are varicose veins of the back passage, or anus. They are sometimes very painful and itchy, and they can be made worse by constipation. Your GP can advise on treatment.