

# Antenatal Visits...



## What to Expect

### What is an 'antenatal visit'?

Antenatal visits are consultations with a doctor or midwife that allow confirmation that all is progressing normally during your pregnancy.

At a typical antenatal visit, you'll have the opportunity to discuss how things are going from your perspective: how you are feeling, whether you have any problems or concerns, whether the baby is moving, for example.

Typically, you will be asked about:

- The baby's pattern of movement.
- Whether you have any swelling in the ankles and hands.
- Whether you have problems such as pelvic pain, back pain or sciatica, reflux, and how well you're sleeping.

At a typical visit, you will have a check of your blood pressure, and an examination to check the size of the uterus, and to try to determine the position of the baby. Other factors, such as an estimate of the amount of waters around baby, will be made. You will usually have either an ultrasound of the baby or a check of the baby's heart with a Doppler. Sometimes you will be weighed, or have a urine check.

There is rarely any need for an internal (vaginal) examination unless there are particular concerns – **this is not a routine examination** in the absence of particular problems.

### Tests

All of your routine pregnancy tests are typically arranged at your antenatal visits. These will include blood tests, imaging tests such as ultrasound, and tests such as urine analysis, or swabs to check for group B streptococcus.

Sometimes, if there are particular concerns or if you go past the due date, you might have a formal trace of the baby's heart taken – a 'CTG' test.

### What to talk about

As well as discussing the state and progress of your pregnancy, it is important to bring up any problems or concerns that you have.

Make sure you are clear about what to do if there are problems out-of-hours, and where to go if you have any emergency issues.

It is important to find out about what to bring to hospital when you are in labour, and how to contact the hospital.

You should also take the time discuss the plans and wishes you have for birth – often a specific appointment is made for this discussion.

