

Improving information provision for pregnant women

Scope

To help health professionals inform pregnant women and their partners effectively so that they can make decisions about care in pregnancy and childbirth.

To provide effective information, you should ...

- **Spend time** on providing information to pregnant women and their partners
- **Listen attentively** to take account of what the pregnant woman and her partner expect, and allow them to ask questions and bring up problems
- **Give oral information based on up-to-date scientific data** and on rights and regulations and, if possible, complete this with reliable written documents
- **Use appropriate language and/or media**, especially for people with a sensory or mental impairment or who do not speak or read French
- **Suggest a further consultation if necessary** (particularly at the beginning of the pregnancy) if the amount and/or nature of the information to be provided require it
- **Provide written information** (or indicate where this can be found) particularly about medical care during pregnancy, risk prevention, and the availability of local healthcare facilities
- **Ensure** continuity of care by information sharing between the professionals concerned and the woman or couple

¹ For full guidelines and supporting scientific evidence (in French), see *Comment mieux informer les femmes enceintes?* (April 2005) - www.has-sante.fr

At the beginning of the pregnancy

- **Explain the benefits** of regular care during pregnancy for the mother and her baby
- **Suggest a care programme:** the likely number of consultations, their timing and the purpose of each (clinical examination, tests prescribed, looking for signs and symptoms that can affect the health of the mother and fetus), referral for specific management if necessary
- **Emphasise risk prevention and education:** always suggest an interview (individual or as a couple) in the first trimester of pregnancy. This interview opens the way to individual or group training sessions on birth and child welfare, and to the introduction of appropriate management if psychological or social difficulties are identified
- **Clearly inform the pregnant woman about her right** to accept or refuse a screening test (whether it is compulsory, or not compulsory but offered routinely). Explain to her why it is useful, what benefits are expected and any disadvantages and consequences the test may have
- **Highlight the risks of self-medication** and explain to the woman that she must not take any medicinal products without a medical prescription
- **Identify situations of vulnerability** (domestic violence, addictions, etc.) and insecurity of any kind (an unsteady relationship between the couple or within the family, job insecurity etc.)
- **Take account of the lifestyle and psychosocial situation** of the woman or the couple in order to provide information about:
 - care services, cost of services, options for care during pregnancy, antenatal classes, the birth itself, and postnatal care facilities available in the local hospital network and from community care providers
 - how early the mother needs to register at the place where she wants to give birth
 - any risks associated with her lifestyle and how to prevent them (smoking and other addictions, travel, physically demanding work, etc.)
 - the risks of food poisoning, and advice on nutrition and a healthy lifestyle
 - support networks for parents
 - facilities for better access to treatment and psychosocial support for women or couples in difficulty
 - maternity rights and how to obtain them

Information as part of care during pregnancy

Content	MONTH						
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Compulsory examinations							
Clinical examination	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Interview – individual or as a couple	●	Midwife's assessment of risk prevention and educational needs: antenatal classes and/or guidance about help and support facilities					
Qualitative HCG	In case of doubt						
Pregnancy test	●						
Pregnancy declaration	Before 15 weeks						
Blood group	●					2nd test if not carried out earlier	
Screening for irregular antibodies	●	If Rhesus negative or history of transfusion, continue monthly screening for irregular antibodies during Months 6, 8 and 9					
Identification and determination of antibodies	If irregular antibody test +			If irregular antibody test +		If irregular antibody test +	
Rubella blood test	● ^a	If result negative, every month until 18 weeks					
Syphilis blood test	●						
Toxoplasmosis blood test	● ^a	If result negative, every month until Month 9 and after delivery					
HBs antigen screening				●			
Glycosuria, Albuminuria	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Blood count				●			
Routine tests							
Obstetric ultrasound	11--13 weeks + 6 days	20--22 weeks			31--32 weeks		
Serum markers (trisomy 21)	14--18 weeks						
HIV 1 & 2 serology	●						
Vaginal smear: Strep B screening						35--38 weeks	
Tests dependent on symptoms or history							
Complete blood count (CBC)	●						
Midstream specimen of urine (MSU)	●		●			●	●
Cervical smear	If >2 years						

^a Unless immunity has been acquired (results confirmed in writing)

Some useful links

- **Parent support.** Parent support from the French Ministry of Solidarity and Health (*Ministère des Solidarités et de la santé*) - <https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/affaires-sociales/familles-enfance/soutien-a-la-parentalite-10875/dispositifs-d-aide-aux-familles/article/les-dispositifs-caf>
- **Nutrition before and during pregnancy.** National nutritional health programme (*Programme national nutrition santé - PNNS*) - www.mangerbouger.fr/pro/sante/alimentation-19/informer-et-accompagner-ses-patients/la-nutrition-avant-et-pendant-la-grossesse.html
- **Food supplements and pregnancy.** French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (*Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail - ANSES*) - www.anses.fr/fr/content/compl%C3%A9ments-alimentaires-et-grossesse-l%E2%80%99anses-recommande-d%E2%80%99%C3%A9viter-la-multiplication-des
- **Breastfeeding.** National nutritional health programme (*Programme national nutrition santé - PNNS*) - <http://www.mangerbouger.fr/pro/sante/alimentation-19/informer-et-accompagner-ses-patients/allaitement-maternel.html>
- **Maternity rights.** French national health insurance information "*Maternité, paternité, adoption*" www.ameli.fr/hauts-de-seine/assure/droits-demarches/famille/maternite-paternite-adoption
- **Prescription of medicinal products and over-the-counter medicinal products.** French National Health Safety Products Agency (*Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé - ANSM*) - [www.ansm.sante.fr/Dossiers/Medicaments-et-grossesse/Medicaments-et-grossesse/\(offset\)/0](http://www.ansm.sante.fr/Dossiers/Medicaments-et-grossesse/Medicaments-et-grossesse/(offset)/0)
- **List of regional pharmacovigilance centres.** [https://ansm.sante.fr/Declarer-un-effet-indesirable/Pharmacovigilance/Centres-regionaux-de-pharmacovigilance/\(offset\)/4](https://ansm.sante.fr/Declarer-un-effet-indesirable/Pharmacovigilance/Centres-regionaux-de-pharmacovigilance/(offset)/4)
- **Clinical Guidelines for Obstetrics and Gynaecology.** French national health authority (*Haute Autorité de Santé*) - www.has-sante.fr
- **Health and safety at work.** French national research and safety institute (*Institut national de recherche et de sécurité - INRS*) - www.inrs.fr/demarche/femmes-enceintes/ce-qu-il-faut-retenir.html#ae12f7c5-8190-4dad-b137-b669d612323d
- **Tobacco, alcohol, cannabis and other substance - Related disorders.** Interministerial Mission for the Fight against Drugs and Behavior addiction (*Mission interministérielle de lutte contre la drogue et les conduites addictives - MILDCA*) - www.drogues.gouv.fr
- **Vaccination during pregnancy.** "*Le calendrier vaccinal*" from the French Ministry of Solidarity and Health (*Ministère des Solidarités et de la santé*) - <https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/prevention-en-sante/preserver-sa-sante/vaccination/calendrier-vaccinal>
- **Violence against women.** Stop French State Secretariat in charge of gender equality and fight against discrimination (*Secrétariat d'État chargé de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et de la lutte contre les discriminations*) - <https://stop-violences-femmes.gouv.fr/>
- **Travel abroad.** *Vaccinations Info Service France* - <https://vaccination-info-service.fr/La-vaccination-au-cours-de-la-vie/Recommandations-aux-voyageurs>