

# Pregnancy Circles

A different way of having  
Antenatal Care

We can provide help from an interpreter if you would like this.

گر آپ انگریزی نہیں پڑھتے ہیں تو آپ اپنے پہلے انتباہ ہونے والی ملاقات میں کسی ترجمان کے ساتھ بول سکتے ہیں (Urdu)

Haddii aadan akhrineyn Ingiriisi, waxaad la hadli kartaa turjubaan marka aad ku jirto ballantaada ugu horreysa ee umusha (Somali)

Dacă nu puteți citi în limba engleză, puteți vorbi cu un interpret la prima întâlnire prenatală (Romanian)

Jeśli potrzebna jest pomoc tłumacza w czasie wizyty z położną, zostanie ona zapewniona (Polish)

যদি আপনাইংরজৌ পড.নে না তাহলে আপনআপনার প্রথম জন্মনয়িন্ত্রণরে অ্যাপয.ন্টেমন্টে একজন দোভাষী সহ কথা বলতে পারনে (Bengali)

## What is this all about?

This leaflet is about Pregnancy Circles, which is a different way of organising the midwifery care women have when they are pregnant.

## What is a Pregnancy Circle?

In a Pregnancy Circle, instead of having antenatal care where you come to the hospital to see a midwife for a brief appointment on your own, you have your care and discussion in a small group with women who are due around the same time as you and who live in your area. The sessions will be longer than usual antenatal appointments (2 hours) and the idea is that you can discuss pregnancy issues with other women, and the same 2 midwives, throughout your pregnancy. You also meet once after the birth. You get the same clinical care and tests offered to all pregnant women and you will see a midwife on your own briefly during every Pregnancy Circle. You are given all your group dates after your booking/scan appointment so that you can plan ahead. Each group will decide when partners will be invited to sessions. In the event of another pandemic requiring social distancing, the Circle sessions may be held online or you will be offered individual appointments with a midwife.

## Why are you asking me?

Pregnancy Circles have begun in your area, so you might be able to join one.

## If I am interested what happens next?

In this area, this is a fairly new way of organising antenatal care. We know women and midwives who take part in Pregnancy Circles like it a lot, but we don't know if it improves the health of women and babies. So it needs to be studied more.

## What will happen to the information I give in the study?

The study will follow the Data Protection Act 2018. All information you give us will be stored securely and treated as confidential. We will not use your name, or any other information that could identify you in questionnaires or any reports on the research. The anonymous data from the study may be kept in a data archive for other researchers to use in the future. Any data not suitable for other researchers to use will be kept in a secure data archive. Data will be reviewed every 5 years and any information not needed will be destroyed.

## Do I have to decide what I want to do now?

No, if you want more time to think this is fine. If you have questions, please ask. If you agree to give your phone number or email, we will get in touch in a few days to see what you have decided.

## Who could I contact about this research study?

The trial is sponsored by City, University of London. If you have any questions about the research or want further information, please see [blogs.city.ac.uk/reach](https://blogs.city.ac.uk/reach) or contact the research team at [reach@city.ac.uk](mailto:reach@city.ac.uk). You can also talk to the midwife at your first antenatal/scan appointment. If you have a complaint about the research please follow normal complaints procedures at your NHS Trust.

We therefore may invite you to take part in a research study of Pregnancy Circles. At the moment Pregnancy Circles are only open to women who take part in this research. It is part of the REACH pregnancy programme which is funded by the National Institute for Health Research. Service users have helped us with the design of the study.

## What happens in the research study?

Half the women taking part in the research will have Pregnancy Circle care; the other half will have usual antenatal care. The type of care you receive will be decided by a computer. This is called randomisation and means we can properly compare Pregnancy Circles with usual care. You have an equal chance of each type of care being the one you will receive. Information on your participation will be provided for other staff providing care to you.

## What happens if I say yes to taking part in the research study?

You will fill in a consent form and a questionnaire. This will take about 10-15 minutes. We will tell you straight away how your antenatal care will proceed (Pregnancy Circles or usual care). If you need more time, you can take the consent form home and we will contact you to complete the process of taking part. When you are 8 months pregnant, and again when your baby is 3 months old, we will ask you to fill in another short questionnaire. These will be sent to you in the post or by email at home. We can help you fill these in over the phone or with an interpreter. Also, some information from your hospital records, such as where you have your baby, will be collected by researchers. We may invite you to be interviewed by a researcher, when you have had your baby, about your experience of antenatal care; it is up to you if you want to do this. Also some antenatal care sessions may be observed by a researcher.

Any woman who experiences a miscarriage will not be contacted by the research team.

## Do I have to take part in the research?

No, you do not have to take part; it is your choice. Saying no will not affect the usual care you receive. If you do join a Circle, you can change your mind at any time, and go back to usual care. However if you are selected to receive usual care you can't change to Pregnancy Circles. Whichever type of care you get, you can withdraw from the research and continue with usual care, at any time.

## What are the advantages of taking part?

You will be helping us learn how we can provide better care for women in pregnancy. Also, you will receive a £10 voucher for each of the 3 questionnaires you do as a thank you for your time. Interestingly we know that just taking part in research can be beneficial because of the positive effects that come from helping out in this way.

## Are there any disadvantages to taking part?

Being in the study will take a bit of time because of filling in the 3 questionnaires. Also bear in mind that you'll get either Pregnancy Circles or usual antenatal care. Some women may be disappointed if they don't get the type of care that they think they might prefer.



Lewisham and Greenwich  
NHS Trust



West Hertfordshire Hospitals  
NHS Trust



Whittington Health



The Princess Alexandra  
Hospital  
NHS Trust



Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust



Lancashire Teaching  
Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust



Surrey and Sussex Healthcare  
NHS Trust



Epsom and St Helier  
University Hospitals  
NHS Trust



East Suffolk and  
North Essex  
NHS Foundation Trust



Barts Health  
NHS Trust



Royal Free London  
NHS Foundation Trust



Worcestershire  
Acute Hospitals  
NHS Trust



Basildon and Thurrock  
University Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

Supported by



**CITY**  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON  
EST 1894

All research in the NHS is looked at by an independent group called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This study has been approved by London - Surrey Borders Research Ethics Committee.

Version 5.0, 03/02/2023