

# Information for Expecting Parents



**EVERY NATION**  
CHURCH • LONDON



## Welcome to Parenting!

As you enter this new phase in your lives, we at Every Nation Church London would like to be able to support you in any way we can. This pack is a start and aims to help you through the nine months of pregnancy and first few weeks of parenthood with some helpful tips and advice. Along side this, please have a look at my blog on marriage and family at [www.buildingfamily.wordpress.com](http://www.buildingfamily.wordpress.com). I hope you will find this encouraging and useful.

Another thing you should find helpful is our **New Parents workshop**. It's a chance for us to show you the Growing Kids Gods Way series. The first book, Along the infant way/Babywise, a lot of us found very helpful and I have a number of audio sets that we lend out. We will also talk about other books that we have found useful and will try to answer any questions you may have about labour and those first few months. These dates will be advertised in church and on my blog.

At any time you are welcome along to one of our mums connect groups that meet weekly across London. (See [www.everynation.co.uk](http://www.everynation.co.uk) for details) The mums' just get together to support one another and chat over a drink whilst the kids sleep or play.

I hope you find the information in this pack useful. Please email me if you have any questions. We look forward to walking this next season with you. It's exciting stuff!

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## Useful websites

There are lots of good websites out there for new parents and parents to be. If you like receiving emails then get signing up!

A good all rounder is [www.babycentre.co.uk](http://www.babycentre.co.uk). which will send you weekly updates during pregnancy of how big the baby is and how you might be feeling. After you've had the baby they send you updates on what stages the baby is at and other things you may be struggling with. I really enjoyed this site whilst I was carrying Andrew and for months after.

If you want to receive lots of freebies and coupons, sign up for the baby clubs at your supermarket. They all have them. Tesco also send you some good magazines too and one of the contributors is Tracy Hogg, author of the Baby Whisperer.

More specifically, if you are using or going to use disposable nappies [www.pampers.com](http://www.pampers.com) and [www.huggies.com](http://www.huggies.com) are good baby clubs to join. They will send you sample nappies and money off coupons but also good booklets too. If you find you like one brand more than another you can swap vouchers in the Parents room!

Other websites that are good through pregnancy or for first time mums are [www.emmasdiary.co.uk](http://www.emmasdiary.co.uk) and [www.bounty.co.uk](http://www.bounty.co.uk) . You should receive an Emma's diary and Bounty book from your midwife so ask them if they are not forthcoming. You can order them online. Both books contain vouchers to claim mum to be packs from Mothercare/Boots/Tesco. You then get a new mums pack in hospital which contains a voucher for a weaning pack later on. Ask your midwives for them if you don't get the original. At any time you miss a stage; (if you don't stay long enough in hospital or have your baby at the weekend!) you can go to the website and order or ask your midwife

## Book Recommendations

For mums to be, Debs Olivier recommends *Dear Lord, I feel like a whale by Jane Bullivant*. I have a copy to lend out but it's £6.99 to buy at the bookshop.

If you are asked what you would like as a present for the new born, or have a birthday or Christmas whilst pregnant I would strongly recommend getting a copy of "*What to expect in the first year*" by *Heidi Murkoff, Arlene Eisenberg and Sandee Hathaway*. It is full of great information and helps you answer the question, "Is this normal?" which you will ask many times in the first year! They also do "*What to expect when you're expecting*" and "*What to expect – the toddler years*"

At the new parents workshop we discuss other books on different parenting styles.

## Maternity Clothes

In the early stages of pregnancy you can get away with undoing buttons and wearing elastic waists. But as your normal clothes get uncomfortable, you may need to move up a size or lend from a friend who has a bigger wardrobe! Usually maternity clothes will swamp you until around 5 months.

The best way to get maternity clothes is to borrow from a friend of the same size! You normally want maternity clothes in same size you were before you got pregnant. Please ask me if you don't know anybody as there are lots of clothes doing the rounds at church in various sizes! If you do want to purchase some new clothes (and it's always nice to have something new!), here are a few ideas.

**Mothercare:** Can be expensive but they do good end of season bargains.

**Next:** Not available generally instore but can be ordered through their catalogue or online.

**H&M:** A bit cheaper and do some nice stuff.

**Dorothy Perkins:** The larger the store, the better the collection.

**Blooming Marvellous:** They do have some shops or you can order a catalogue online or order direct from the website. Can be pricey but do have end of season bargains.

**Topshop** – limited range, reasonable prices.

**Marks and Spencer** – good range, good quality, prices comparable to Mothercare.

**ASDA** - with big clothing ranges – very reasonable prices, pretty good range

You can also buy cheap and cheerful bigger clothes in places like Q&S, **Peacocks** and **Primark**.

A google search for maternity clothes will give you hosts of on-line shops. Here are a few.

- [www.precious-cargo.co.uk](http://www.precious-cargo.co.uk)
- [www.lizlange.com](http://www.lizlange.com) (*Designer Maternity*)
- [www.marksandspencer.com](http://www.marksandspencer.com). (*Maternity from M&S.*)
- [www.BabyDayz.co.uk](http://www.BabyDayz.co.uk) (*Breastfeeding Wear*)
- [www.goodconnections.co.uk](http://www.goodconnections.co.uk)
- [www.tiffanyrosematernity.com](http://www.tiffanyrosematernity.com)
- [www.bloomingmarvellous.co.uk](http://www.bloomingmarvellous.co.uk)
- [www.bellablumaternity.com](http://www.bellablumaternity.com) (*Dresses and formal wear.*)
- [www.next.co.uk](http://www.next.co.uk)
- [www.businessbump.co.uk](http://www.businessbump.co.uk)
- [www.funmum.com](http://www.funmum.com)
- [www.yummymummy.co.uk](http://www.yummymummy.co.uk)
- [www.IsabellaOliver.com](http://www.IsabellaOliver.com) (*Endorsed by Trinny Woodall.*)
- [www.redoute.co.uk](http://www.redoute.co.uk)
- [www.vertbaudet.co.uk](http://www.vertbaudet.co.uk)
- [www.jojomamanbebe.co.uk](http://www.jojomamanbebe.co.uk)[www.formes.co.uk](http://www.formes.co.uk) (*There is a shop in Guildford*)

## Nappies

You may be asking yourself the question, “Should I use Disposables or Reusables?” It is an issue that does need some serious consideration.

Disposable nappies are convenient, easy to use and getting cheaper. Reusables are expensive initially but only need to be bought once. They cut down on your rubbish by up to 50% which makes a huge impact on the environment and are also free of the chemicals that Disposables use to draw the liquid away from your child’s skin.

Although Reusables are cheaper in the long run, to use them successfully, it would be really helpful to have the attitude that you want to do your bit to save the environment

Have a look at [www.thenappylady.co.uk](http://www.thenappylady.co.uk) to see all the pros and cons.

## **Baby Equipment**

Babies seem to need a lot of stuff, according to the books, who all have there lists of essentials for newborns and labour wards! Jacqui and Darren Parker did a survey of all of these lists and sent a combined one around to a few mums for comments on what was really needed. Please let me know if you would like it emailed to you. The more ticks an item has, the more likely you will find it necessary or useful.

There are lots of different places to obtain equipment. Many things can be borrowed, particularly things that don't last a long time such as Moses baskets and newborn clothes. Please ask me if you do want to borrow any equipment as lots of the mums have stuff stored away! Babies grow at a rate of knots so rather borrow these things and invest your money in things that are going to last such as a pushchair and cot.

For new baby equipment have a look at [Kiddicare.co.uk](http://Kiddicare.co.uk). It is an amazing website. There is even a virtual tour of the store! It appears to have most brands of everything but cheaper than the standard stores. My advice would be to go round the shops such as Toys R us and Mothercare first to try it out especially the prams/pushchairs. Car seats should also be tried in the car before you buy as not all fit all cars.

## **Baby Clothes**

Again second hand clothes are great. Girl friends will love buying outfits from Next, M&S, Gap, H&M and Mothercare. When the pressies run out though, along with the maternity pay, you can get some cheaper but good quality stuff from Tesco, Asda, Primark and Peacocks.

## Note on Car seat use

Midwives and Health visitors seem to be giving different advice with regard to using a car seat. Here is what [www.babycentre.co.uk](http://www.babycentre.co.uk) had to say on the matter.

“Car seats in Britain are carefully designed to allow a baby to sleep comfortably with his head and back supported. Some of their main advantages are being able to transport your child safely by car, and being able to carry him in and out of the car and house undisturbed while he is asleep. However, being in a semi-upright position for long periods can place a strain on your baby's developing spine so it's a good idea not to use the seat for prolonged periods. Long journeys should ideally be broken up so that your baby can be taken out of his seat for breaks when awake.

There is also an increasing trend to leave babies in their car seats when they are not in the car — in some cases up to eight hours a day. However, babies with gastric reflux are more likely to vomit in this position and very premature babies could have breathing difficulties if sat in a baby seat for longer than necessary. Even full-term babies have been found to experience low levels of blood oxygen if left for long periods in car seats and buggies, particularly when asleep.

Overall, there shouldn't be problems with healthy babies sleeping in car seats and buggies for a few hours at a time, but it's advisable not to use them when a pram or cot is readily available.”

## **Pregnancy blues**

You've taken the pregnancy test, and shared the good news with everyone. Everyone says, "Congratulations! You must be so happy!" Yes, you are glad you're expecting, and yet, you're not quite ecstatic. You're downright unhappy sometimes, in fact. To make matters worse, you then feel guilty about being unhappy and make yourself even more depressed. Is something wrong with you? No.

## **Signs of depression**

Pregnancy can be a cheerful time, but not always, and not for every woman. At least 10 per cent of pregnant women suffer from bouts of depression. We may try to gloss over these feelings as we've always been led to believe that pregnancy should be a time of joy, or perhaps we chalk our sadness up to the usual moodiness that comes with pregnancy. But depression can become a severe problem for some women.

You may be suffering from depression if you feel some of the following symptoms:

- Inability to concentrate
- Anxiety
- Extreme irritability
- Sleep problems
- Extreme or unending fatigue
- A desire to eat all the time or not wanting to eat at all
- A sense that nothing feels enjoyable or fun any more
- Persistent sadness.

## **What causes it**

Sometimes, pregnancy hormones - which are raging as your body prepares for its nine-month odyssey - are to blame, some experts believe. While hormonal ups and downs affect all pregnant women, some feel the swings more intensely.

Another major cause of depression is relationship difficulties - especially if you aren't getting along well with your partner.

### Other causes:

- Family or personal history of depression

If depression runs in your family, or if you have had past bouts yourself, you may be more likely to become depressed now that you're expecting.

- Stressful life events

Are you moving to a bigger home in anticipation of your baby's arrival? Are you having trouble at work? Any major life change such as a move, divorce, or job loss, can cause depression.

- Problems with the pregnancy

A troubled pregnancy - one that causes severe morning sickness, for example - can take its emotional toll.

- Infertility or previous pregnancy loss

If you experienced many difficulties trying to get pregnant, or have had a miscarriage in the past, you may find yourself worrying about the safety of this pregnancy.

- Past history of abuse

Pregnancy can trigger painful memories in women who have survived emotional, sexual, physical, or verbal abuse. Your body is changing beyond your control, which can bring up long buried issues and baggage. Your loss of control over your changing body may mirror the loss of control you felt in the past.

### How you can cope

- Take it easy

Resist the urge to pack in as many chores as you can before the baby comes. You may think you need to set up the nursery, clean the house, or work as much as you can before you go on maternity leave, but you don't. Pencil yourself in on top of your to-do list. You won't have as much time for yourself once the baby's around. Read a book, have breakfast in bed, or go for a nice long walk around the park. Taking care of yourself is an essential part of taking care of your baby.

- Talk it out

Work through your fears and worries about the future with your friends. Keep the lines of communication between you and your partner free and clear, too. You need his support, which he can only give if you're open with him.

- Consider therapy or counselling

If you've tried everything to snap yourself out of a low spell for two weeks but nothing seems to work, seeing a therapist or a counsellor may help. You need to find someone you can feel safe with, and whom you trust. You may also benefit from antidepressants - some of which are safe for pregnant women. Talk to your doctor or midwife about this.

### **When to worry**

If you're suicidal or feeling disoriented and unable to handle your daily responsibilities, or if you're having panic attacks, talk to your doctor or midwife immediately. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness. It's a sign that you're a good mother who is willing to take the steps necessary to keep her baby and herself safe and healthy.

### **The future**

Fifty per cent of women suffering from severe depression during pregnancy go on to develop postnatal depression, but therapy during pregnancy can reduce that number dramatically. In addition, building a support network now - made up of friends, family members, your partner and doctor - means your helpers will already be in place when the baby is born.

## Baby Dedication

As a church we do not 'christen' or perform infant baptism. We believe in baptism of believers: that all will one day need to make their own decision to surrender their life to Christ and choose to be baptized. We do, however, provide **child dedication**. This is an opportunity to publicly dedicate your children to the Lord; to commit yourselves as parents to raising your child in a Godly way such that they grow in the faith; and for us as a church to stand together and pray a blessing on these children.

With the increasing numbers of babies being born, the number of baby dedications requested has also increased dramatically. In order to balance this special family time with the other requirements of a Sunday service, we generally schedule a maximum of one Sunday service a month where we conduct baby dedications and we open it to a number of families. There is no set date each month so if you do have a particular date that would suit you due to family visiting then you need to contact us as soon as possible to book the date. We start with a small reception at around 10:00 for families and friends just to make the day a bit special, and allow us to talk through the timings and flow of the dedication within the service. This may also be an ideal time to invite those unchurched friends. We will just need to know the number of guests the week before so that we can cater accordingly. Please contact me if you have any queries or questions.