

Pregnancy



Pregnancy can happen when people of the opposite sex have sexual intercourse and do not use contraception.

How can you get pregnant?

If a young woman and young man have sex, or are sexually intimate with each other, without using contraception, there is a risk of the young woman becoming pregnant. Young women can also become pregnant if contraception fails, for example if a condom splits. They might become pregnant as a result of violence, such as rape or sexual abuse.

The legal age of consent in England, Wales and Scotland is 16 years old, and in Northern Ireland 17 years old, but young women can become pregnant if they have sex at any age, once they have started their periods.

How can I avoid getting pregnant?

The main way of avoiding getting pregnant is to use contraception when having sex with someone else. You can find out about the different kinds of contraception and what is right for you by talking to your doctor or family planning adviser, or by visiting a website such as www.brook.org.uk.

I think I'm pregnant, what should I do?

Getting pregnant when you have not planned to is very scary. You might be especially afraid of your family or friends finding out and it might seem easier to keep the pregnancy to yourself. However, the sooner that you talk to someone about your pregnancy, the more options you have about what to do. Your family may not react badly to your pregnancy and could well be supportive and helpful.

You have several options if you are pregnant which include:

- Have the baby and bring it up.
- Have the baby adopted or fostered.
- Terminate the pregnancy (which is also called abortion).

Which option is right for me?

You need to act quickly in order to keep all your options open. The choice that is right for you will depend on your circumstances. Only you can decide which is option right for you.

I'm too scared to tell the dad, what should I do?

Facing being a teenage parent can be just as frightening for young men as it can for young women. They may need support as much as young women do to deal with the situation. Talking about it together can help find a solution to the situation and so you can support each other through it. It might seem hard to talk about it, but it can really help.

If you are a young man or a young woman and are worried about pregnancy you can talk to us about it any time. You don't have to be scared that you will be judged or laughed, at because you won't be.

Other sources of help

Brook Advisory Centres

165 Grays Inn Road
London WC1X 8UD
Telephone: 0800 0185 023
Website - www.brook.org.uk

Free, confidential sex advice and contraception for young people.

Family Planning Association (FPA)

2-12 Pentonville Road
London N1 9FP
Telephone: 020 7837 4044
Website - www.fpa.org.uk

Promoting sexual health and family planning by means of information, research, publications and publicity.

Extra links

Brook Advisory Centres - commonly known just as Brook - is the only national voluntary sector provider of free and confidential sexual health advice and services specifically for young people under 25. Visit www.brook.org.uk.

likeitis gives young people access to information about all aspects of sex education and teenage life. Visit www.likeitis.org.uk.