Hospital Bag Checklist

What to pack for you, your baby and your birth partner

Aim to have your bag packed by around 36 weeks - earlier if you are expecting twins or have been told your baby may come early. Pack as if staying one or two nights; more can always be brought in. Keep this list in the bag and tick things off.

FOR LABOUR

- [ ] Maternity notes or hospital app login, and your birth plan (plus a spare copy)
- [ ] Comfortable loose clothing or an old nightdress for labour
- [ ] Dressing gown, slippers and warm socks
- [ ] Water bottle - one with a straw is easiest
- [ ] Snacks and energy drinks
- [ ] Lip balm, hair ties, headscarf or bonnet
- [ ] Massage oil or lotion; TENS machine if you are using one
- [ ] Phone, long charging cable, headphones, music playlist
- [ ] Glasses, if you wear contact lenses

FOR YOU, AFTER THE BIRTH

- [ ] Two or three nightdresses or pyjamas - front-opening if breastfeeding
- [ ] Maternity pads (two packs) and big, comfortable underwear in dark colours
- [ ] Nursing bras and breast pads
- [ ] Toiletries: toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, deodorant, shower gel, flannel
- [ ] Skincare and haircare products that work for your hair and skin - hospitals rarely stock them
- [ ] Towel, dark colour
- [ ] Comfortable going-home outfit, roughly six-month-pregnancy size
- [ ] Any regular medication you take
- [ ] Earplugs and an eye mask - postnatal wards are bright and busy

FOR YOUR BABY

- [ ] Five to seven vests and five to seven sleepsuits (newborn and 0-3 months)
- [ ] Hat, scratch mittens, socks
- [ ] Cardigan or jacket, and a blanket for going home
- [ ] Nappies, newborn size - at least 20 to 24 - plus cotton wool or fragrance-free wipes
- [ ] Three or four muslin cloths
- [ ] If formula feeding: ready-made starter pack with sterile teats
- [ ] Car seat - fitted and practised before the day. You cannot leave by car without one.

FOR YOUR BIRTH PARTNER

- [ ] Snacks, drinks, and change or a card for parking and machines
- [ ] Phone and charger, camera
- [ ] Change of clothes, toothbrush, deodorant
- [ ] List of people to update - and an agreement about announcements

General information, not medical advice. Always speak to your midwife, GP or health visitor about your circumstances. In an emergency call 999.

DOCUMENTS AND PRACTICAL

- [ ] Photo ID and any hospital letters
- [ ] House keys, and a plan for older children and pets

YOU DO NOT NEED IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS TO RECEIVE MATERNITY CARE

Care that is immediately necessary must always be given, whatever your status. If you are worried about being charged, Maternity Action's advice line can help.

My maternity triage number _____

My hospital / birth centre _____