

Healthy Start: free food and vitamins for pregnant women and families on low incomes.



Pregnant women and parents with children under four in receipt of certain benefits may be eligible for Healthy Start vouchers worth £3.10 a week (and more when the child is under one year old).

Please encourage people to complete and send off an application form. Whilst this can be started on line <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthy-start-vouchers/how-to-apply/online-application-form/> it does currently need to be printed and sent off in paper format.

Alternately people can have the form e mailed to them or posted directly if they ring the Healthy Start helpline on **0345 607 6823**.

Although the form states that a health professional needs to sign part B this is no longer the case and forms should be submitted with the applicant signing part A.

Who qualifies?

People qualify for Healthy Start if they are at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4 years old and they or their family get:

- Income Support, or
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, or
- Child Tax Credit (with a family income of £16,190 or less per year), or
- Universal Credit (with a family take-home pay of £408 or less per month). If earnings go above £408, people on the scheme continue to receive HS vouchers for up to 3 months (and they restart if income goes down again during this time). After 3 months earned income above £408, vouchers stop automatically - would need to reapply.

All pregnant women under 18 are eligible regardless of income.

What can vouchers be used for?

The vouchers can be spent on:

- Plain cow's milk – whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed. It can be pasteurised, sterilised, long life or UHT.
- Any kind of fresh, frozen and tinned fruit and vegetables including loose, pre-packed, whole, sliced, chopped or mixed fruit or vegetables, fruit in fruit juice, or fruit or vegetables in water, but not those to which fat, salt, sugar or flavouring have been added.
- Any kind of fresh, dried and tinned pulses, including but not limited to lentils, beans, peas and chickpeas but not those to which fat, salt, sugar or flavouring have been added.
- Infant formula milk that says it can be used from birth and is based on cow's milk.

People eligible for Healthy Start will also be sent vouchers for free vitamins.