

HEALTHY START

Tameside's Healthy Start Toolkit

Date: 2019



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Introduction

The Healthy Start Statutory Scheme provides those from a lower socio-economic status with vouchers to spend on plain cow's milk, plain fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables and infant formula milk and Healthy Start vitamins for pregnant women, mums and children under the age of four. Healthy Start vouchers supports instilling healthier food choices early on and supporting the learning and development of babies and children.

What are the vouchers?

Healthy Start vouchers are designed to support pregnant women or women with young children on low incomes with Healthy Start vouchers to help them buy nutritious food and vitamins for their child. £3.10 per week is available for each child aged between one and four; for each baby under 1, £6.20 of vouchers are available. During pregnancy, a voucher of £3.10 a week is also available. Vouchers for vitamins are available in addition.

Who is eligible?

Healthy Start vouchers are available for all pregnant women under the age of 18 regardless of income. Pregnant women and families with children under the age of four who qualify for the following benefits are also eligible:

- Income Support, or
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance,
- Child Tax Credit with a family income of £16,190 or less per year,
- Pension Credit,
- Universal Credit with a total family earned income of no more than £408 per month.



What can you buy with Healthy Start vouchers?

- Plain cow's milk – whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed; pasteurised, sterilised, long-life UHT
- Plain fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables – whole or chopped, packaged or loose
- Infant formula milk that can be used from birth (and is based on cow's milk)

Items eligible for purchase with Healthy Start vouchers

	Yes	No
Milk	<p>Plain cow's milk, including whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed.</p> <p>It must also be pasteurised, sterilised, long-life or ultra-heat treated (UHT).</p>	<p>Flavoured milk, coloured milk, evaporated milk, condensed milk, goat's milk, soya milk (or other plant based milks) , powdered milk (unless it's infant formula) or milk with anything added to it such as milkshakes or vitamin-enriched milk.</p>
Infant Formula Milk	<p>Formula milk that is based on cow's milk and says on the packaging that it can be used from birth.</p> <p>Nutritionally complete stage one formula which is suitable from birth.</p>	<p>Infant formulas that are not based on cow's milk – such as soya formulas and goat's milk formulas.</p> <p>Any follow-on formulas that say on the packaging that they are for babies aged six months or older.</p>
Plain Fresh or Frozen Fruit and Vegetables	<p>Whole, chopped, packaged or loose.</p>	<p>No processed fruit or vegetables, such as baby purées, tinned fruit or dried fruit.</p>

You are SO important, here's why:

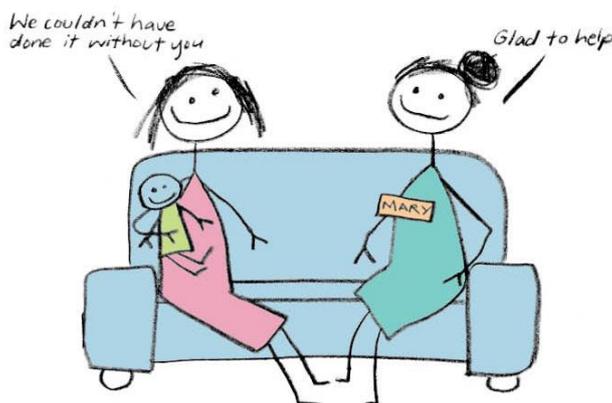
We recognise that you hold an important role with families who may be eligible for Healthy Start vouchers. As you will have knowledge of the family's circumstances we believe that you are in a good position to speak about Healthy Start vouchers, explore if the family is eligible and encourage the family to claim their Healthy Start vouchers.

Our roles when working with families are often to support families and ensuring they can access all help and support available to them- this is just one other way to support families and ensure they are accessing the financial support to buy healthy food to ensure they are eating nutritious food and meals.

Families can be supported to complete their application form by any professional or worker who supports the family. The application form does need to be signed off by the applicant (family) and then passed on to a health care professional for signature before sending off.

Only the following health care professionals below are able to sign off the application form:

- **GP**
- **Nurse**
- **Midwife**
- **Health Visitor**



Tameside currently has a 61% annual uptake of Healthy Start vouchers. This is equivalent to at least £204,418 of missed benefits per year, but could be much higher as families can claim multiple vouchers (depending on the number of children), and claim for vitamins as well.

We know that you are in positions where you may have a good relationship with the family and know and understand their family circumstances- this means you could start the conversation about Healthy Start vouchers and support them in accessing what they are entitled to.

Given the extent of food poverty in Tameside, increasing voucher uptake could really support people who are in need. Fruit and veg consumption is lowest in low income groups, so this scheme can help increase this, helps with income maximisation, may help increase food security and avoid food poverty.

Health professionals who can authorize vouchers:

If you are one of the following (**GP, Nurse, Midwife, Health Visitor**) you can complete a Healthy Start application form with a family and you are also required to sign the application form too. If a family brings a completed application form (either completed by themselves or completed with support from another professional) you will need to sign this.

Professionals and workers who can support completion of application form:

Anyone can support a family to complete their Healthy Start application form, families can even do this themselves if they are able to. However some families may not know about the Healthy Start scheme, or know that they are eligible to the scheme or may not be confident in completing the application form. If you are in a position where you can let families know about the Healthy Start scheme and support them with completing the application form, then please do.

Healthy Start Applications:

All applications for Healthy Start must, by law, be supported by a registered health professional – usually a midwife or health visitor (but it can be any registered nurse or doctor). Requiring the application form to be signed by a health professional aims to encourage low-income women and families to contact local antenatal, postnatal and child health services, making a clear link between the scheme and broader health and public health priorities.

Research shows that women who are introduced to the scheme by a health professional who takes time to explain its public health context and health benefits are more likely to view it as a partnership with them to benefit the health of their child, rather than as a simple financial contribution. They may therefore be more likely to make best use of the scheme.

For more information about your role with Healthy Start vouchers, click here:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/for-health-professionals/your-role/>

Please note, health professionals are **not** expected to check that an applicant is getting the benefits they claim to be – the Healthy Start processing team do that. Nor do health professionals need to report any subsequent changes in an applicant's circumstances – it's the applicant's responsibility.

Where to use Healthy Start vouchers:

Healthy Start vouchers can be used in any shop that is registered to take part in the scheme. You can find out your local Healthy Start retailers on this webpage by just entering your postcode:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthy-start-vouchers/where-to-use-the-vouchers/>



Raising awareness of the Healthy Start scheme:

We can all play an important role when it comes to letting families know about the Healthy Start scheme.

Ways you can increase awareness of the Healthy Start scheme are by:

- Displaying posters within your setting
- Putting a Healthy Start scheme flyer into families information packs
- Bringing it up in conversation with each family you speak to
- Make sure all of your colleagues who also support families are aware of the Healthy Start scheme
- If you have social media pages for your service, how about sharing information on Healthy Start and let people know you can support them with the application form. You can find social media posts/tweets on page **7**
- Take the quiz on pages **8-10** to test yours and your colleague's knowledge of the Healthy Start Scheme and see where you may need to brush up on your knowledge.
- The answers to the quiz are on pages **11-12**.

Posters and flyers have been adapted to give relevant and up-to-date information for Tameside, these are available on pages (X-Y) which you can download and print yourself. There are also a limited amount of posters and flyers which have been printed, please email publichealth.enquiries@tameside.gov.uk to request these resources.

Online promotion of the Healthy Start scheme:

Hastag: #HealthyStart

Twitter

Are you on low-income support? Did you know that you can apply for Healthy Start vouchers subject to eligibility to spend at local shops? Find out more about how to apply here:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

If you're pregnant or have children under the age of four, and are on benefits you could qualify for the free food shopping vouchers. Find out more here: <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Free food vouchers available to people in Tameside on low-income support. Don't miss out. Find out if you qualify here: <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Free food vouchers can be spent at local shops in Tameside. Find out if you're eligible to apply and how to apply here: <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

GPs, nurses, midwives and health visitors can sign-off your application for free food vouchers. To find out if you qualify to apply visit <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Find out if you qualify for the free vouchers to spend on milk, fruit and vegetables at your local shops. Visit <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Facebook

Did you know that you can apply for free food shopping vouchers to buy milk, fruit and vegetables if you're pregnant or have children under the age of four?

You will also receive that can be exchanged for free Healthy Start vitamins for pregnant women, breastfeeding women and children aged from six months to four years.

Don't miss out on this great opportunity.

To find out if you're eligible to apply and how to apply visit: <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

Application forms must be signed off by either a GP, nurse, midwife or health visitor.

Healthy Start Quiz

Developed by Sam Dyer, Cambridge Sustainable Food

This quiz is an easy way to test knowledge and understanding of the healthy start voucher scheme. Try having a go and see how much you know about the healthy start voucher scheme and what you might need a bit more information on.

1. How confident are you on a scale of 1 to 10 about the Healthy Start scheme? (optional question)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How much is each Healthy Start voucher worth?

- A. £2.90
- B. £3.10
- C. £3.65
- D. £4.20
- E. £5.25
- F. £6.20

3. How often are vouchers posted out to claimants?

- A. Once a week
- B. Every fortnight
- C. Every four weeks
- D. Every eight weeks
- E. Every twelve weeks

4. Circle all items which can be purchased with Healthy Start vouchers.

- A. Plain whole milk
- B. Soy milk
- C. Baby food (puree)
- D. Frozen peas
- E. Plain semi-skimmed milk
- F. Dried fruit e.g. raisins
- G. Follow-on infant formula
- H. Plain skimmed milk
- I. Bunch of grapes
- J. Plain UHT milk (longlife)
- K. Canned peaches
- L. Fresh smoothie
- M. Bag of potatoes
- N. Goat milk

5. **Who of the following is eligible for Healthy Start vouchers even if they receive no benefits? Choose all that apply.**

- A. Women under 18
- B. Women who are unemployed
- C. Women who are full time carers
- D. Women with a registered disability
- E. Families with more than 4 children
- F. Single mothers

6. **If you receive Child Tax Credit you automatically are eligible to receive Healthy Start vouchers.**

- A. True
- B. False

7. **If you receive Universal Credit you are automatically eligible to receive Healthy Start vouchers.**

- A. True
- B. False

8. **What was the average uptake of Healthy Start vouchers annually for Tameside?**

- A. 48%
- B. 55%
- C. 61%
- D. 72%
- E. 86%

9. **Most families receive one voucher per child, per week. Under what circumstances would a family receive two vouchers per week for one child?**

- A. The baby was born prematurely
- B. The child is 0-12 months old
- C. The mother is not breastfeeding
- D. The child is 2-4 years old

10. **When can women first apply for Healthy Start vouchers?**

- A. 8 weeks of pregnancy
- B. 10 weeks of pregnancy
- C. 12 weeks of pregnancy
- D. 14 weeks of pregnancy
- E. When the baby is born

11. Vouchers can be backdated.

- A. True
- B. False

12. When applying for Healthy Start, who can sign the application form?

- A. Midwives
- B. Foodbank staff
- C. Doctors and nurses
- D. Early years setting staff
- E. Health visitors

13. What evidence must be proved to show eligibility for Healthy Start vouchers when having the application signed by a health professional?

- A. Council tax bill
- B. Proof of universal credit or benefits
- C. No evidence required
- D. Three recent bank statements

14. When does a child stop receiving Health Start vouchers?

- A. On their 4th birthday
- B. On their 5th birthday
- C. When they start school
- D. On their 3rd birthday

Healthy Start Quiz Answers

1. How confident are you on a scale of 1 to 10 about the healthy start scheme? (optional question)

Answer optional

2. How much is each healthy start voucher worth?

ANSWER: £3.10

3. How often are vouchers posted out to claimants?

ANSWER: C) Vouchers are posted to families every four weeks and vitamin vouchers every eight weeks.

4. Circle all items which can be purchased with Healthy Start vouchers.

ANSWER: A, D, E, H, I, J, M) (Plain whole milk, Frozen peas, Plain semi-skimmed milk, Plain Skimmed milk, Bunch of grapes, Plain UHT milk (long-life), Bag of potatoes)

5. Who of the following is eligible for Healthy Start vouchers even if they receive no benefits? Choose all that apply.

ANSWER: A) Only women under 18 are eligible to receive Healthy Start vouchers even if they receive no benefits. Although women who are unemployed, full time carers or disabled may receive Healthy Start vouchers, this will be based on specific eligibility criteria for Healthy Start.

6. If you receive Child Tax Credit you automatically are eligible to receive Healthy Start vouchers.

ANSWER: False, Women receiving Child Tax Credit can only receive Healthy Start vouchers if their total family income is £16,190 or less per year. Families which claim Child Tax Credit and earn above this amount are not entitled to Healthy Start vouchers.

7. If you receive Universal Credit you are automatically eligible to receive Healthy Start vouchers.

ANSWER: False. Universal Credit claimants are only eligible for Healthy Start if their take home family income is £408 per month or less (not including any income from a Universal Credit payment).

8. What was the average uptake of Healthy Start vouchers annually for Tameside?

ANSWER: C) 61%

9. Most families receive one voucher per child, per week. Under what circumstances would a family receive two vouchers per week for one child?

ANSWER: B) Children 0-12 months old are entitled to two vouchers per week, worth £6.20 total. For example, if a woman was pregnant and had a child under 12 months, the family would receive three vouchers per week (two for the child and one for woman who is pregnant).

10. When can women first apply for Healthy Start vouchers?

ANSWER: B) Women can apply for Healthy Start vouchers from confirmation of pregnancy at 10 weeks. After the baby is born, parents must notify the Healthy Start Issuing Unit in order to continue receiving vouchers for the baby.

11. Vouchers can be backdated.

ANSWER: False. Vouchers cannot be backdated (however in some cases they can be, more information can be found at: www.healthystart.nhs.uk/backdates-vouchers/)

12. When applying for Healthy Start, who can sign the application form?

ANSWER: A) C) E). A registered health professional must sign Part B of the application form, including a midwife, health visitor, doctor or nurse. Requiring the application form to be signed by a health professional aims to encourage low-income women and families to contact local antenatal, post-natal and child health services, making a clear link between the scheme and broader health and public health priorities.

13. What evidence must be proved to show eligibility for Healthy Start vouchers when having the application signed by a health professional?

ANSWER: C) Health professionals do not need to see any proof of eligibility and bear no responsibility for checking an applicant's eligibility, nor are they responsible for reporting any subsequent changes in an applicant's circumstances. The eligibility of each applicant is checked by the Department of Work and Pensions so health professionals should be happy to sign the application forms without checking for proof of eligibility, and they will not be contacted for signing a form which turns out to be an invalid claim.

14. When does a child stop receiving Health Start vouchers?

ANSWER: A) On their 4th birthday.

PREGNANT OR HAVE CHILDREN UNDER FOUR?

Don't miss out on **HEALTHY START** vouchers worth up to £6.20 a week per child

The vouchers can be spent on:

- plain fresh or frozen fruit and veg chopped, packaged or loose
- milk and infant formula milk
- you are also entitled to free vitamins

Do I qualify for Healthy Start?

You qualify for Healthy Start if you're at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old and you or your family get either:

- **Income Support**
- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Child Tax Credit** (with a family income of £16,190 or less per year)
- **Universal Credit** (with a family take home pay of £408 or less per month)



almost half of eligible families in Tameside are **missing out on their food vouchers**



HAVE YOU GOT A VITAMINS VOUCHER?

HEALTHY START will help give your children the best start in life

Free Healthy Start vitamin supplements are available to pregnant women, infants and children on certain benefits via a voucher scheme. Vitamin supplements can also be purchased if you do not qualify for free ones.

Healthy Start vitamins are recommended for:

- Breastfed infants from birth
- Formula-fed infants who are over six months and taking less than 500ml infant formula per day
- Children up to their fourth Birthday
- All pregnant women

Vouchers can be exchanged or vitamins purchased from any of the clinics and Children's Centres listed below:

- | Clinics | Children's Centres |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Albion Drive Clinic | • Greenside Children's Centre |
| • Ashton Primary Care Centre | • Hyde Flowery Children's Centre |
| • Ann Street Clinic | • Ridgehill Children's Centre |
| • Dewsnap Lane Clinic | • St Peters Children's Centre |
| • Hyde Clinic | |
| • Hattersley Clinic | |
| • Glossop Primary Care Centre | |
| • Mossley Clinic | |
| • Stalybridge Clinic | |



VITAMINS VOUCHER

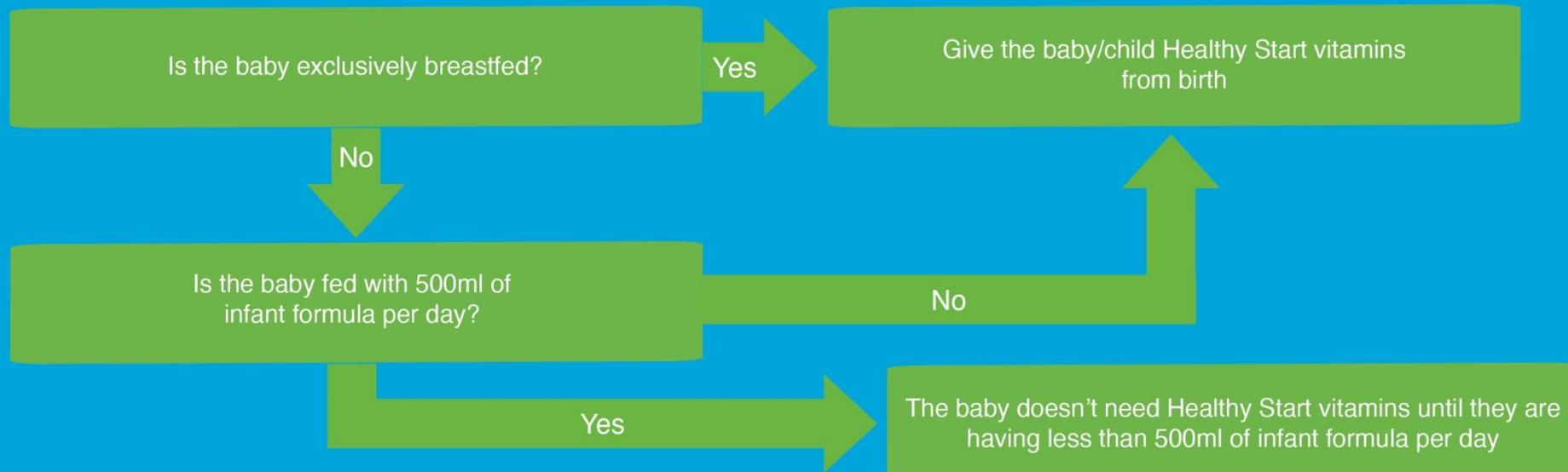
FREE HEALTHY START Vitamins

Healthy Start Children's vitamin drops contain vitamins A,C and D.

When given as instructed, these drops can help prevent vitamins deficiencies and maintain normal growth and health in your child.



HEALTHY START CHILDREN'S VITAMIN DROPS DECISION TREE



Healthy Start women's vitamins

All pregnant and breastfeeding women, particularly teenagers and young women, are at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

Pregnancy

The UK Department of Health specifically recommend 10 micrograms of vitamin D each day for pregnant and breastfeeding women and 400 micrograms of folic acid each day for women who may become pregnant and up until the 12th week of pregnancy.

Important

This Healthy Start vitamin decision tree applies to full term babies only, not premature babies. If a baby was premature please consult with a doctor regarding vitamin supplements.

Sun Exposure

People who are not exposed to much sun; for example, those who cover their skin for cultural reasons, are housebound or who stay indoors for long periods are also at greater risk of vitamin D deficiency.

People with Darker Skin Tones

People who have darker skin, such as people of African, African-Caribbean and South Asian origin, are also at risk of vitamin D deficiency because it takes their skin a longer time to produce as much vitamin D as it does for someone with lighter skin.

Contact Details

If you have any questions about the Healthy Start Scheme please contact the Healthy Start Tameside team by emailing:

publichealth.enquiries@tameside.gov.uk

HEALTHY START

