NHS
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

We can provide interpreters for a variety of languages, information in larger print or other formats (e.g. audio) - please call us on 01932 723553.

You can use Text Relay to turn telephone communications into text.
Use the Relay UK app on your phone, tablet or PC.
You can also use Relay UK via Minicom or Uniphone.

اگر نیاز به ترجمه دارید، لطفا با شماره 01932 723553 تماس بگیرید.

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਤਰਜਮੇ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ: 01932 723553

اگر آپ اس کا اُردو زبان میں ترجمہ چاہتے ہیں، تو براہِ کرم اس فون نمبر 01932 723553 پر رابطہ کریں

Se precisa de uma tradução por favor contacte: 01932 723553

আপনার অনুবাদের দরকার হলে এখানে যোগাযোগ করুন : 01932 723553

यदि आपको अनुवाद की ज़रूरत है तो कृपया इस नंबर पर फोन करें: 01932 723553

Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

Ashford Hospital
London Road
Ashford, Middlesex
TW15 3AA
Tel: **01784 884488**

St. Peter's Hospital
Guildford Road
Chertsey, Surrey
KT16 0PZ.
Tel: **01932 872000**

Website: **www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk**

NHS
Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Preterm Birth Surveillance Clinic

Obstetrics Department

Patient Information

What is the Preterm Birth Clinic?

The preterm birth clinic aims to provide extra care for women who may have a higher risk of having a baby born too early. The clinic is led by a Consultant Obstetrician.

Why have I been referred to the clinic?

You will be referred to this clinic early in your pregnancy if:

- you have had a miscarriage after 14 weeks of pregnancy
- you have had a previous spontaneous preterm birth before 34 weeks of pregnancy
- your waters broke before 34 weeks in a previous pregnancy
- you have had certain types of treatment to your cervix (for example, cone biopsy, LLETZ)
- you have a short cervix during a scan in this or a previous pregnancy
- you have had a cervical cerclage (stitch around the neck of your womb)
- you have had a previous caesarean section in the second stage of labour

If you have one or more of these risk factors, it does not necessarily mean you will have a premature birth or late miscarriage.

Where can I get more information?

Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists
https://www.rcog.org.uk/

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng25?unlid=10681351820173285455

Further Information

We endeavour to always provide an excellent service, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.
If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

Author: Miss Lilian Ugwumadu **Department:** Obstetrics
Version: 6 **Published:** May 2026 **Review:** May 2029

These signs may include:

- period-like pains or cramps which come and go
- fluid leaking from the vagina
- bleeding from the vagina.
- backache

If you think you may be in labour, do not wait for your next appointment in the preterm birth clinic. Call the Pregnancy advice line on 0300 123 5473.

Should I still attend my antenatal appointments?

You should attend all other antenatal appointments in addition to visiting us. The preterm birth clinic is extra care for women more likely to have a preterm birth, it does not replace any other care you have.

Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

Contact the lead consultant for the clinic or one of the team, via the Antenatal Clinic phone number. Your Obstetrician or Midwife may also be able to answer any questions you have about your treatment.

What will happen when I visit the clinic?

- You will speak with a doctor who will ask about your history and discuss your personalised plan of care.
- Your plan will include what may happen if something changes while we are monitoring you.
- We will also provide you with support and reassurance during what may be an anxious time.
- It is important to understand that while there is evidence to suggest that monitoring and treatment can reduce your risk, unfortunately not all miscarriages and preterm births can be prevented.

What tests might I have?

- A transvaginal scan, where we put an ultrasound probe into your vagina to measure the length of your cervix, because a short cervix increases your risk of a late miscarriage or premature birth.

- A urine test and vaginal swab test to check for infection because some infections may make early birth more likely.

- A vaginal swab testing for Actim partus; A negative result means it is highly unlikely you will give birth in the next week or two, which can put your mind at ease. A positive result does not mean you will give birth early; however, you are at higher risk of this happening. If you have a positive result your plan of care will be reviewed with you.

Do the tests have any risks?

All these tests are safe for you and your baby.

How often do I need to come to the clinic?

Often, we see most patients about every two weeks between 14 and 24 weeks of pregnancy. You may require more frequent monitoring and treatments to reduce the risk of preterm birth.

If you are among the small number of women who remain at high risk, we will continue to monitor you up to 34 weeks of pregnancy.

What treatment will I be offered if I am at high risk of premature birth or late miscarriage?

There are several treatments which we can offer you. These include one or more of the following:

- **cervical cerclage,** where a stitch is put around the neck of your womb. This is a day case procedure performed in hospital under a spinal or general anaesthetic

- **progesterone (hormone) suppositories** which you put into your vagina till 34 weeks

- **antibiotics** to treat any infection

- if you are at high risk of preterm birth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, we may offer **steroid injections** to help mature your baby's lungs, **Magnesium sulphate** to protect your baby's brain and **antibiotics** to prevent an infection.

When to seek advice?

Sometimes there are signs that you may be going into labour. Often these signs may not lead to preterm birth, however it is important to let your midwife or obstetrician know so you can get advice.