

How to discuss the care that's right for you with your healthcare professionals.

Being able to discuss your choices, preferences and options with your health professionals is vital to ensure that you feel listened to, and that they are able to support you in your decisions.



The best advice is to be informed. Absorb as much information as possible to learn about what your body is going through and will go through. When going to appointments, if allowed, take someone with you as a second pair of ears. Sometimes it is difficult to listen and process information when it is given to you and you may not take all of it in.

Prepare questions to take to appointments with you, phone notes are useful if you think of a question randomly on the go and don't have access to pen and paper. Trust your gut and listen to your body, if you are being told something or advised about a decision, don't feel pressured or coerced into a decision you don't feel happy with. Any healthcare professional will be happy to listen to your concerns and discuss all options with you so you can make an informed decision about your care.

Using the BRAIN approach:

BRAIN is an acronym and simple tool used to help with decision making:

- **BENEFITS** – What are the benefits of the options you have?
- **RISKS** – What are the likely risks of the options you have?
- **ALTERNATIVES** – Are there any alternatives to the options you are considering?
- **INFORMATION** – What other information do you need to make the right decision?
- **NOTHING** – What would be the impact if you did nothing?

When it comes to birth, it can be an unpredictable process and it is good to be open-minded about your birth plan. However, be informed of all your choices and if you have a strong opinion on any aspect, discuss this with the person looking after you.

Pregnant or post birth? Your pelvic health will be assessed both at your 16 week antenatal appointment, and by day 10 postnatal. If not talk to your GP at your 6/62 check-up.

