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mentoring and workshops for teenagers facing profound challenges

**When you realise you've missed a period** and that you might be pregnant, it can be scary. It can play on your mind, and you find yourself wondering about all the various scenarios that could play out. You think about what it might be like to have a child in your life, and you question whether you want to have a baby at all. You think you start to notice other changes in your body - like you feel a bit nauseous in the mornings, or you think you have put on extra weight, or you feel like your breasts are sore, or you are feeling tired all the time and this can all add to the anxiety of not knowing whether you are pregnant or not. You start searching websites, asking questions, noticing babies in the street, and sometimes you start worrying a lot!

If you find yourself in this situation unexpectedly, it is often easier to avoid the whole thing and pretend it's not happening, but it's really important to try and be brave, take a deep breath and make a decision to actually find out for sure whether you are pregnant or not. All the wondering and questioning can be draining and take up lots of energy, so it's best to work out a plan to find out one way or the other so that you can stop wondering, and start accepting, whatever the result may be.

This is easier said than done, and to find out if you're actually pregnant takes lots of courage. A good place to start is to get a pregnancy test from the chemist, which can be bought for around \$15 or \$20. It helps to buy a packet of two tests, so that you can do them both and double check the results, maybe a few days apart. It's helpful to try and have someone you trust to be with you through this process, like your partner or a close member of your family or your best friend.

# fact sheet

## finding out you're pregnant and telling your family and friends...

This is because sometimes you don't even know how you are going to feel about the result and it's nice to have some support and someone to talk to. Also make sure you read the instructions really carefully so that you don't make a mistake with the results.

If the result of the test is negative, you may experience mixed feelings. Maybe you were really hoping to fall pregnant and you are very sad and disappointed that you have not become pregnant this month. In this instance, make sure you try to stay positive, think through all your reasons why you want to have a baby carefully, and keep trying if you decide that this really is the right stage of your life to have a baby. You could also go and visit your doctor to have a general check up and a chat about becoming pregnant. Talk about your feelings with someone close, and keep looking after yourself by eating healthily and exercising regularly.

If the result of the test is positive, you may also experience mixed feelings. Maybe you are overjoyed about being pregnant and very excited about this new phase of your life. Or maybe you were not really planning for a pregnancy right now, and this is all a bit of a shock for you. Either way, it is really important for you to go and visit your doctor as soon as possible, and ask them for a pregnancy test to get a 100% accurate result. This is so you know exactly what you are dealing with, and will help you get good information about what to do from here.

When you are young, and if you aren't trying to become pregnant, it can be very tough trying to work out how to tell your parents, or your partner or your friends that you're expecting a baby. You think they might judge you, dump you or kick you out. However, you do need to do something about the situation pretty quickly and not put it off, because it affects the choices that you have. Your parents, partner and friends may be shocked at the beginning, but your true supporters love you, and it's likely they are going to find out at some stage anyway. It's best to find a way to tell them yourself so that you can make a plan

about your future, and what you would like to do about being pregnant. We talk more about the choices you have in our fact sheet—Pregnancy Choices.

Some tips on how to tell the people you love about your pregnancy include the following:

- ♥ Think about who you trust most and who might be most supportive and able to help you
- ♥ Approach them at a good time when they are not busy or pre-occupied with something else
- ♥ Tell them in person if you can, or maybe by text or phone because that gives them time to think
- ♥ Try not to tell them on msn or facebook because of privacy
- ♥ Ask them to come for a walk with you, or to go for a milkshake together
- ♥ Prepare yourself that it might not go well at first, but keep hope that in time they will accept it
- ♥ Tell them that you are worried and scared and that you would really like their help
- ♥ Ask if you can meet again in a day or two to give them time to let it sink in
- ♥ Be brave and stay hopeful, and if it doesn't help with this person, try another trusted person

It's best to talk to an adult that you really trust and can relate to about the possibility that you are pregnant, like your Mum or Dad, or an Auntie, or a teacher, but sometimes that's just embarrassing and really hard. So, before you get up the courage to do it, you could also have a look around the following great websites or visit these people, (and remember they will keep everything confidential for you)...

[www.likeitis.org.au/teenage-pregnancy](http://www.likeitis.org.au/teenage-pregnancy)

[www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au)

[www.pregnancysupport.com.au](http://www.pregnancysupport.com.au)

[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

Your family Doctor

Your School Counsellor