HEALTHY START

Answers to some common questions

This guide answers some of the questions your clients may ask about Healthy Start

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About Healthy Start vouchers

Who qualifies for Healthy Start vouchers?
You qualify for Healthy Start if you are pregnant or have a child under four years old AND:
• you or your family get Income Support, or
• you or your family get income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, or
• you or your family get Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and have an annual family income of below £14,155 (2006/07)

OR:
• you’re pregnant and under 18 years of age.

How much do I get?
• If you are pregnant, you get one voucher a week worth £2.80.
• For each baby under the age of one, you get two vouchers a week worth a total of £5.60.
• For each child aged over one and under four, you get one voucher a week worth £2.80.

How do I get Healthy Start vouchers?
If you or your children become eligible for the scheme, you will need to fill in all sections of a Healthy Start application form that are relevant. (Vouchers are not sent out automatically when you claim a qualifying benefit.)

You will then have to ask your health visitor or your midwife to fill in and sign Part B of the form before you return the form.

I get milk tokens. Do I need to apply for Healthy Start?
No. If you are still eligible, you will get Healthy Start vouchers automatically. This replaces the old Welfare Food Scheme.

Using Healthy Start vouchers

Can I buy milk, fruit and vegetables with one voucher?
Yes. For example, if you bought two pints of milk, you could also buy some fruit and vegetables and pay with the same voucher.

Can I get change from a voucher?
No, so make sure you use all of the value of the voucher.

Why can’t I buy frozen or tinned vegetables with my vouchers?
We want you to eat healthily and to keep the scheme simple. Some frozen and tinned foods are covered in batter, fried or contain added salt and sugar, which is not always healthy.

My baby was born early. Can I get extra help?
Yes. If your baby was born earlier than expected, contact the Healthy Start helpline on 0845 607 6823 to give us the correct date of birth. We will then send you two vouchers a week from the baby’s birth until 12 months after the due date. This means you will get extra vouchers.

Can I get vitamin supplements through Healthy Start?
Yes. You can get vitamin supplements (Vitamin C, D and folic acid) for yourself if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Your child can get a vitamin supplement called Abidec (containing vitamins A, C and D) through Child Health Clinics.
What kinds of infant formula can I buy with my vouchers?
You can use them towards the cost of any kind of infant formula that is suitable for use from birth, provided it is based on cow's milk. You cannot use them for follow-on or soya formula.

What if the formula I want is more than the value of two vouchers?
Most formulas are similar, so you don't need to buy the most expensive. If your vouchers are not enough, however, you can then top up with cash. Your baby doesn't always need or use 900g of milk every week. When young, and after weaning, you should be giving your baby less than this.

Can I buy ready-to-feed formula?
Yes, if you want, but it is more expensive.

Getting help with Healthy Start vouchers

How will I know where I can use my vouchers?
You can use your vouchers with any participating shop or retailer in the UK.
- Look for the Healthy Start sticker in shop windows.
- The postcode locator on www.healthystart.nhs.uk will list your nearest shops.
- Call the Healthy Start helpline on 0845 607 6823 for information. This number is also on the back of your vouchers.

Where can I find easy recipes for fresh fruit, vegetables and milk?
Go to www.healthystart.nhs.uk for simple advice and recipes for fruit, vegetables and milk.

My vouchers were refused by a shop/the shop is breaking the rules. What can I do?
Call the Healthy Start helpline 0845 607 6823 for advice.

My circumstances have changed. Who do I tell?
Call the Healthy Start helpline 0845 607 6823 for advice. They may ask you to contact the Child Tax Credit helpline or your local Jobcentre Plus.