The Family Naturopath



The Natural Starter

First Trimester Survival Guide

A free pregnancy toolkit from
The Family Naturopath

Welcome

Congratulations on your pregnancy!

Whether this is your first baby or not, the first trimester can bring a mixture of excitement, anticipation and uncertainty. Your body begins changing from the moment you conceive, and although you may not look pregnant yet, an incredible amount is happening behind the scenes.

It's completely normal to feel exhausted, nauseous, emotional or simply unlike yourself during these early weeks.

This guide is part of The Natural Starter—my pregnancy support programme from The Family Naturopath. The Natural Starter includes free resources, online education and personalised pregnancy support, all designed to help you feel informed, confident and supported throughout your pregnancy.

I'm Katie Ruane, founder of The Family Naturopath and creator of The Natural Starter. As a degree-qualified Naturopath and Postnatal Doula, I support families from preconception through pregnancy and into the fourth trimester with practical, evidence-informed advice.

I hope this guide helps you feel more confident as your journey begins.

Katie Ruane
Founder, The Family Naturopath
Creator of The Natural Starter

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What Happens During the First Trimester?

The first 12 weeks are some of the busiest of your entire pregnancy.

During this time:

Your baby's brain, heart and major organs begin to develop.

The placenta starts forming.

Pregnancy hormones rise rapidly.

Your blood volume begins increasing.

Your body starts adapting to support your growing baby.

Even if you aren't showing yet, your body is working incredibly hard every single day.



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Common First Trimester Symptoms

Every pregnancy is different, but many people experience some of the following:

✓ Nausea or vomiting

✓ Extreme tiredness

✓ Food aversions

✓ Increased hunger

✓ Constipation

✓ Bloating

✓ Heartburn or indigestion

✓ Frequent urination

✓ Tender breasts

✓ Mood changes and emotional ups and downs

Many of these symptoms are a normal response to the hormonal changes happening during early pregnancy.



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Nourishing Your Body

You don't need a perfect diet.

Aim for simple, nourishing habits that support both you and your baby.

Try to:

- Eat little and often if nausea makes larger meals difficult.
- Include a source of protein with every meal and snack.
- Eat colourful vegetables and fruit whenever possible.
- Stay well hydrated throughout the day.
- Keep nutritious snacks close by.
- Listen to your appetite and don’t worry if every meal isn’t perfect.

Remember—progress is far more important than perfection.



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Easy Snack Ideas

Apple with peanut or almond butter

Greek yoghurt with berries

Oatcakes with hummus

Cheese with wholegrain crackers

A handful of unsalted nuts and seeds

Boiled eggs

Banana with full-fat natural yoghurt

Vegetable sticks with houmous



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Looking After Yourself

Growing a baby is hard work. Looking after yourself isn't a luxury—it's part of looking after your baby too.

✔️ Rest whenever you can.

✔️ Accept help when it's offered.

✔️ Go for gentle walks.

✔️ Get outside for fresh air each day.

✔️ Prioritise sleep.

✔️ Stay hydrated.

✔️ Be kind to yourself.

✔️ Remember that every pregnancy is different.



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Gentle Tips for Nausea

Nausea is one of the most common first trimester symptoms. It can feel relentless, but there are small things that may help.

- Eat little and often — an empty stomach can make it worse
- Keep plain crackers by your bed for before you get up
- Sip water throughout the day
- Try ginger in food or drinks
- Rest when you can — tiredness makes nausea worse
- Fresh air and gentle movement can help
- Avoid strong smells where possible
- Eat whatever you can manage — survival mode is okay



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Foods to Focus On

You don't need a perfect diet right now. But when you can, try to include some of these nourishing foods.

Folate-rich foods — leafy greens, lentils, chickpeas, avocado

Iron — red meat, eggs, beans, fortified cereals

Calcium — dairy, sardines, tahini, fortified milks

Omega-3 — oily fish (1–2 portions per week), walnuts, chia seeds

Fibre — wholegrains, fruit, vegetables, oats

Protein — meat, fish, eggs, legumes, nuts, tofu

Vitamin C — citrus, capsicum, berries, tomatoes



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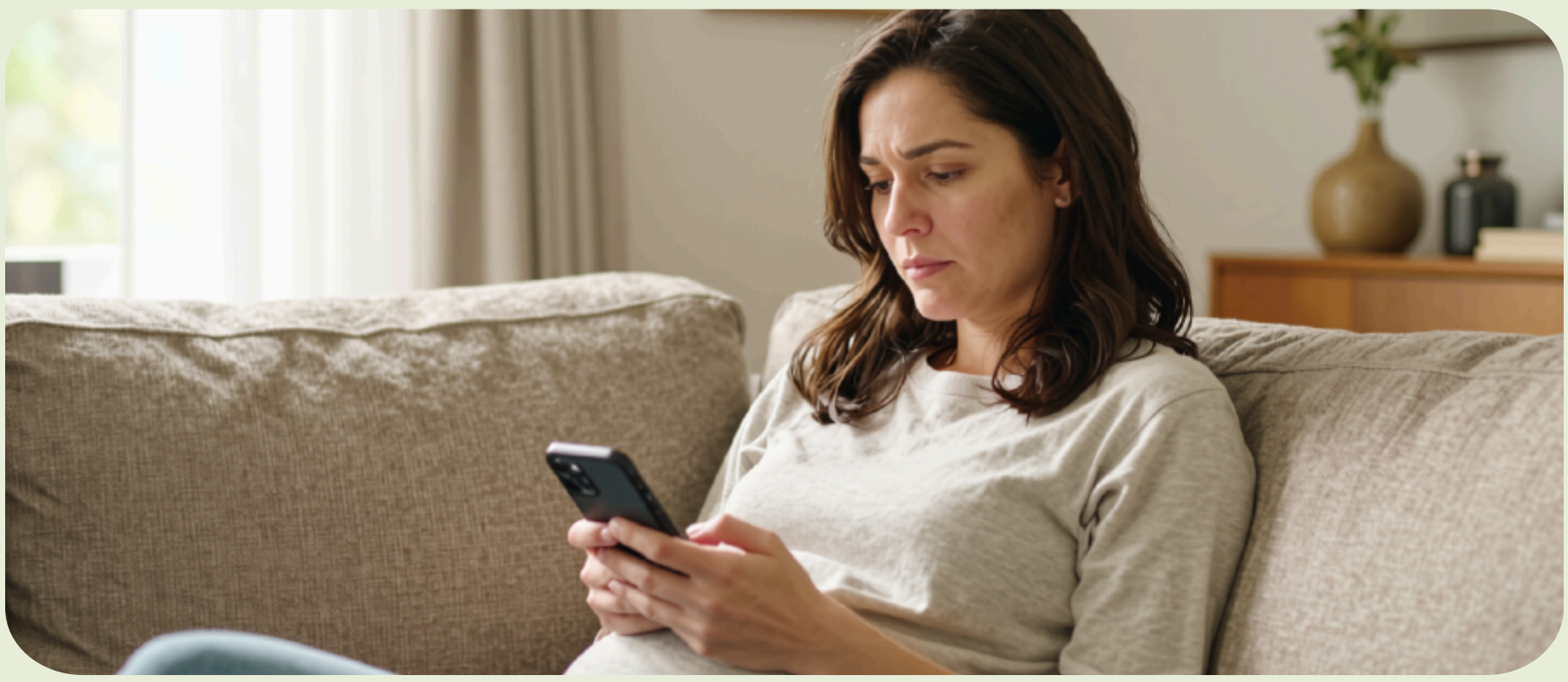
When to Contact Your Midwife

Most first trimester symptoms are normal, but trust your instincts. Contact your midwife or GP if you experience:

- Bleeding or spotting
- Severe or one-sided pain
- Vomiting so much you can't keep fluids down
- Pain or burning when you wee
- High temperature or fever
- Feeling very unwell or something doesn't feel right
- Dizziness or fainting

You know your body best. Never feel like you're bothering anyone by reaching out.



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Your First Trimester Checklist

□ Book your first midwife appointment

□ Start taking folic acid/folate (if not already)

□ Register with a maternity unit

□ Look into your workplace maternity policy

□ Begin a pregnancy journal or notes

□ Stock up on easy, nourishing snacks

□ Rest more — say no to what drains you

□ Tell someone you trust how you're feeling

□ Be gentle with yourself — you're doing great



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Remember

There is no perfect way to do this.

You don't need to have it all figured out.

You are already doing something incredible
— growing a whole new person.

Be patient with yourself.
Be proud of yourself.
And know that support is here whenever
you need it.



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Continue Your Journey with The Natural Starter

This guide is just the beginning.

The Natural Starter brings together education for the first trimester, pregnancy resources and personalised support to help you feel confident throughout your pregnancy.

Start the FREE First Trimester Course

If you haven't already, enrol in my free online course to learn more about:

- Pregnancy nutrition
- Common first trimester symptoms
- Supplements
- Lifestyle advice
- Preparing for the months ahead

course.thefamilynaturopath.co.uk

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Explore The Natural Starter Pregnancy Support

If you'd like personalised support, I also offer one-to-one pregnancy consultations and pregnancy packages through The Family Naturopath.

Find out more at:
www.thefamilynaturopath.co.uk

Or book a nutrition consultation here:
www.thefamilynaturopath.co.uk/quick-food-blitz/

Read More Pregnancy Advice

You'll find evidence-informed articles covering fertility, pregnancy, postpartum recovery, breastfeeding and newborn wellbeing on my website:
www.thefamilynaturopath.co.uk/blog

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The information in this guide is intended for educational purposes only and should not replace personalised medical advice. Always speak to your GP, midwife or another qualified healthcare professional if you have concerns about your pregnancy.

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