



Title: Getting pregnant – Truths and Myths

Level: THIRD/FOURTH

Links to Curriculum for Excellence

Experiences and outcomes	Benchmarks
<p>Using what I have learned I am able to make informed decisions and choices that promote and protect my own and others’ sexual health and wellbeing. HWB 3-47b</p> <p>I know how to manage situations concerning my sexual health and wellbeing and am learning to understand what appropriate sexual behaviour is. HWB 3-49a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies negotiation skills required to have safe and enjoyable sex, for example, knowing when the time is right, mutual responsibility to prevent unintended pregnancy, use of contraceptives, confidence to refuse unwanted sexual contact. Knows how to access confidential information, guidance and help.

Learning Intentions

- Young people are given basic knowledge about conception.
- Myths or false information is challenged.

Success Criteria

- I can describe how pregnancy occurs.
- I can challenge myths about conception/getting pregnant.

Resources to support this activity

- PowerPoint slides
- 2 x card games for Truth/Myth tasks (Prop 1 and Prop 2)
- What pregnancy symptoms are normal?* (duration 1 minute 39)
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/signs-and-symptoms-pregnancy/>

NOTE

There are a series of learning activities at Third/Fourth Level that might usefully be delivered as a package of learning. Delivered as a group there is more flexibility in terms of how long to give each activity, depending on the conversation generated this learning activity and the others may not each need a 50-minute slot – or you might return to review learning after working through several. The other activities alongside this activity on **Getting Pregnant** are:

- Contraception**
- Condoms**
- Sexual health: Getting advice and support**

Young people need an understanding of conception/how people have sex in order to undertake this learning activity. Material is available on this at Second Level, conception is covered in a shorter form in this activity as a refresh of what should be previous learning.

Activity

1. Explain that the activity is about getting pregnant – not just the facts about getting pregnant, but also some of the things that people say about how not to get pregnant. Introduce the idea that some things talked about today will be **truths** and some things will be **myths**. Share the slide:

Truth: Something that is a fact, accurate, that can actually happen, that is real.

Myth: Something that might be believed by people but isn't true; a fiction; a fake idea or story.

2. **Truth or myth?** By way of a bit of fun, this explores the idea of a truth and a myth – things the young people might have heard, and before they consider pregnancy. Ask the young people to work in 2s/3s and to read through the cards provided (see prop). Their task is to make 2 piles of cards – one is statements they believe to be true, the other statements they believe are myths. Give them time to discuss and sort then work through and find out who through what – **importantly focus on the why they think/know it is truth or myth**. Young people may come up with reasons such as it is a scientific fact or not, it's something they have been brought up to believe is true, it's something they have checked themselves... and you can discuss the veracity of each source of information or reassurance about truth or myth.

It's also possible using the game to acknowledge that a lot of myths have a wee bit of truth but are mostly false.

This is a fun introductory task, whilst establishing the points stated, set a timer if this helps – 1 minute per statement? Followed by some feedback/discussion. *Responses for the teacher/educator in the table below and as a download/prop:*

Truth or myth cards (Prop 1)

1. Tomatoes are a fruit	Truth. This is because it contains the ovary and the seeds of a flowering plant.
2. Dogs sweat through their tongue	Myth. Panting is not the same as sweating. Most of their sweat glands are in their footpads. (But panting does keep them cool)
3. Bats are blind	Myth. They can't see in colour but at night they can see better than we do.
4. If you cut an earthworm in half it will regenerate and become 2 worms.	Myth. The front end will live but the back end will die.
5. Goldfish have a 3 second memory	Myth. Actually, they have a good memory. You can train a goldfish to respond to different light or music.
6. You should drink 8 glasses of water every day.	Myth. It's probably good advice though.
7. If you swallow chewing gum it will stay in your stomach for 7 years.	Myth. It might not digest well but it will just come out in your poo – probably looking the same as when it went in.
8. The inventor of the toilet was called Thomas Crapper.	Myth. But he is real and did help make toilets better with things like flushing!
9. Planet Earth is round.	Truth. Well, it's an oblate spheroid – it's definitely not flat.
10. Finger nails and hair keep growing after you die.	Myth. It just doesn't.
11. $1 + 1 = 2$	Truth. No question.
12. It's dangerous to wake someone up if they are sleepwalking.	Myth. Sleepwalking is dangerous. Wake them up!

3. **How does a pregnancy begin?** Remind the young people that the focus today is on getting pregnant, before getting to some truths and myths about that, share the series of slides. NOTE: This should be a refresh of previous learning. If young people have had no input on conception/pregnancy/birth, material at Second Level *How human life begins, pregnancy and birth* can be covered in full.
4. **Pregnancy: truth or myth?** Use the second set of cards (see prop) and ask young people to work in their small groups again – a similar task with a further 12 statements about getting pregnant. Have them work on it, decide what they think: TRUTH or MYTH? and then as a class/group work through the (response) slides to discuss further.

Truth or myth cards (Prop 2)

1. You can get pregnant the first time you have sex.	TRUTH. If it's your first time or 10th time or 100 th time, the chances of getting pregnant are the same.
2. Scotland has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Europe.	TRUTH. We do.
3. You can't get pregnant if you have sex during your period.	MYTH You <i>can</i> get pregnant if you have sex during your period. Your ability to get pregnant is dependent on when you ovulate, and not directly associated with your period.
4. If a male pulls out before he ejaculates you can't get pregnant.	MYTH When the male has an erect penis he can have pre-cum that has sperm in it. This means pulling out is not a good method to stop pregnancy.
5. Using contraception makes it harder to get pregnant later on.	MYTH Contraception does prevent pregnancy when you're using it. Once you stop using it, your fertility returns.
6. Sperm can live for 3 to 5 days in the right conditions.	TRUTH If the sperm is in a warm, moist environment it can live after the male has ejaculated. If the sperm then gets inside the female's vagina there is a risk of pregnancy.
7. Washing their vagina after sex will prevent a woman from getting pregnant	MYTH Washing a vagina after sex will not wash away the sperm so will not prevent pregnancy.
8. The best way to avoid pregnancy is <i>not</i> have vaginal sex or to <i>always</i> use contraception when having vaginal sex.	TRUTH. The best way to avoid pregnancy is to not have vaginal sex or to always use contraception when having vaginal sex.
9. You can't get pregnant if you have sex standing up.	MYTH You can get pregnant if you are having vaginal sex in ANY position at all.
10. Things that can damage your health (like smoking or drinking alcohol) can also damage the foetus.	TRUTH It is recommended that pregnant women stop smoking and do not drink alcohol as it can affect the foetus.
11. Having sex in water or in the shower prevents you from getting pregnant.	MYTH It doesn't matter where you have sex – you can still get pregnant.
12. A sandwich bag or plastic wrap will work just as well as a condom	MYTH Only condoms are designed to prevent pregnancy; sandwich bags are designed to carry sandwiches.

5. **So, how do you know if you are pregnant?** Firstly, pose the question and ask for some feedback from the group. Then share the slide and watch the short film (set up in advance/scroll down the page to find the film)

For women who have a regular period (monthly menstrual cycle) the earliest and most reliable sign of pregnancy is a missed period.

Women who are pregnant sometimes have a very light period, losing only a little blood. Other signs of being pregnant can include:

- feeling sick or vomiting
- strange tastes, smells or cravings
- needing to urinate (pee) more often
- sore breasts
- feeling tired

The best way to confirm though is to use a pregnancy test.

What pregnancy symptoms are normal? (duration 1 minute 39)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/signs-and-symptoms-pregnancy/>

6. **Key message.** Share the slide with this key message and check understanding, stress that any doubt or concern about being pregnant is always worth checking out as soon as the young person can do so.

If you think you are pregnant (or you think your partner might be pregnant) it is important to speak to someone you trust **as soon as possible**. You might be worried or scared but there is help and support. It's best to find out. It's good to get a pregnancy test done as soon as you can.

7. **To end**, acknowledge contributions and remind the young people that they can come to you with any questions that they have.

Connecting with home

The text below could be used to communicate with home about this activity.

We are continuing our learning about relationships, sexual health and parenthood. We will be giving information to young people about getting pregnant – in particular we want them to know the facts and know what isn't true about anything they might be told. As with all our learning we are providing this information now so that young people have it and understand the importance of the choices they will make in relationships. In other lessons we will give information about contraception and condoms.

This article that talks about the myths teenagers might hear about getting pregnant:

<https://sexetc.org/info-center/post/pregnancy-myths-debunked/>

Practitioner Notes