

Antenatal infectious disease screening **will continue** throughout the Covid-19 pandemic as part of your routine antenatal care.

For additional advice on COVID-19 for pregnant women and parents in Northern Ireland please see the following website:- <https://www.ni-maternity.com/antenatal-care/>

In Northern Ireland all pregnant women are offered a screening blood test to check for hepatitis B, HIV, and syphilis infection and for rubella virus (german measles) susceptibility.

The blood test is part of the booking bloods offered at the women's first antenatal appointment. The vast majority of women screened will not be infected, or be susceptible to the rubella virus, but for the very small number of those who are, the benefits of screening are substantial.

The diagnosis, treatment and management offered to mothers or vaccination given, once the baby is born, means the health of the mother can be much improved and the chances of the baby being infected can be greatly reduced.



The antenatal infection screening programme is a complex programme, involving a wide range of professionals working in maternity units and laboratories through to regional hepatology, genito-urinary medicine, neonatal and paediatric services. All have to work closely together. The Public Health Agency and partner organisations are responsible for ensuring that pregnant women have access to safe, effective, high quality and equitable screening programmes.

The screening programme performs to nationally agreed, and DHSSPSNI, endorsed screening standards.

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