

One minute guide



A Guide to the Healthy Start Scheme

What is the Healthy Start Scheme?

The Healthy Start Scheme is a government funded, means tested scheme that aims to improve diets and provide a nutritional safety net for low-income families in the UK.

The Scheme is available to pregnant women, who are more than 10 weeks pregnant or parent/carers who have a child under the age of 4 who receive state benefits

Why should I promote the Healthy Start Scheme?

If you work with families, particularly those with a low-income, you play a key role in signposting to the Healthy Start scheme online application and promoting the free Healthy Start vitamins.

Research shows that women who are introduced to the scheme by a professional, who takes the time to explain its public health context and health benefits, are more likely to understand the benefits and make better use of the scheme.

What do families on the Healthy Start Scheme get?

- Healthy Start card with money on it to purchase healthy food and milk (fruit and vegetables, pulses, cow's milk, infant formula) in Retailers that accept MasterCard.
Every 4 weeks money will be added to the card
From 10 weeks pregnant each week will get £4.25
Birth – 1 year old each week will get £8.50
From 1 – 4 years old each week will get £4.25
- Free Healthy Start vitamins during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- Free Vitamin drops for babies and children up to the age of 4.

Who is eligible for the Healthy Start Scheme?

All women under the age of 18 regardless of income

Women over the age of 18 qualify for the scheme if:

- In receipt of income support, Income based job seekers allowance, Income related employment and support allowance.
- Child Tax credit with a family income of or less than £ 16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on (paid for 4 weeks if you or your partners or carers go to less than 16hrs per week.
- Pension Credit (must include child addition)
- Universal credit, total family take home pay no more than £408 a month after tax

Non-British Citizens who have a British Citizen child may get Healthy Start if all the following apply:

- They have at least 1 British Child under 4 years old
- The family earns £408 or less a month after tax
- They cannot claim public funds either because of their immigration status or they do not have an immigration status

How can families access the Scheme?

- Online applications for those on Universal Credit or Child Tax Credit - <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>
- Phone (0300 330 7010) or email (healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk) to request an application if in receipt of Job seekers Allowance, Income Support
- If you are not a British citizen but your child is. To apply for Healthy Start, ask for an application form via email healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk . Only use this email address if you think you cannot claim public funds because of your immigration status
- If an interpreter is required, call Healthy Start helpline 0300 330 7010 (select option 3)

Further details of the scheme can be found on: <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/what-youll-get-and-how-to-shop/>