



Is DISCHARGE normal?

Don't get your knickers in a twist over an increase in discharge. We explain why it's common in the first trimester



Congrats, you're pregnant! You may experience a healthy glow, unusual cravings and, err, an increased amount of discharge down there. But don't worry, you're not alone!

What causes it?

In the first trimester, your hormones cause the cervix and vaginal wall to become softer, increasing the amount of discharge. The clear, odourless fluid prevents infections travelling up from the vagina to your baby.

Should it smell or itch?

While an increased amount of vaginal discharge is natural, if it becomes

discoloured, smelly, irritating or blood-stained, it may be something more serious. Thrush is very common in expectant mums due to hormones changing the levels of acidity in the vagina. The discharge is usually white and curd-like and causes a sensation of intense itchiness, but it doesn't harm your baby. It can be treated with prescriptive cream from your GP.

What is Bacterial Vaginosis?

Hormonal changes trigger a change in the bacterial balance of the vagina, which can sometimes lead to an infection known as Bacterial Vaginosis (BV). The change causes bad bacteria to outnumber the good,

Be prepared

In the week leading up to your labour you may experience some discharge that contains streaks of mucus or blood. This 'show' is your body starting to prepare for birth and happens when mucus that has been in your cervix during pregnancy starts to come away.

resulting in an inflammation in the vagina and a watery, fishy-smelling discharge. Although common, BV has been linked to an increased risk of miscarriage and premature birth, so it's best to speak to your GP if you suspect you may have it. It can be treated with antibiotic tablets or gels, but half of women treated experience symptoms again within six months.

DID YOU KNOW?

If you're breastfeeding and suffering from thrush, you should avoid taking an oral treatment and use vaginal pessaries or creams instead