



Healthy Start



Free fruit, veg, milk, pulses and vitamins



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What is Healthy Start?

The Healthy Start scheme provides a prepaid card for eligible applicants which can be used to buy healthy food and milk as well as free vitamins.



Transition to digital

The former 'voucher' version of the Healthy Start scheme ceased to operate in March 2022.

It was hoped that by replacing a paper application system and paper vouchers with an online application and a pre-paid Mastercard the scheme would be easier to use, and uptake would increase.

The transition to the digitisation has sadly been plagued with issues

- Application difficulties
- Card issues



Eligibility & application route

Pregnant women or **families** who have a child **under four years** old receiving one or more of the following:

Applying Online

- ✓ Universal Credit with no earned income or total earned income of £408 or less per month for the family
- ✓ Child Tax Credit with a family income of £16,190 or less per year

Applying by email or phone

- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- ✓ Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- ✓ Pension Credit
- ✓ Pregnant women under 18 years old and not getting any benefits



Families should visit www.healthystart.nhs.uk to check their eligibility.

How to apply

Applying online:

✓ www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply

Applying by email:

✓ healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

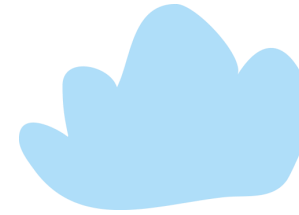
Applying by telephone:

✓ Calling **0300 330 7010**- free from landline, mobiles may charge

If an **interpreter** is required, **select option 2** or email: healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

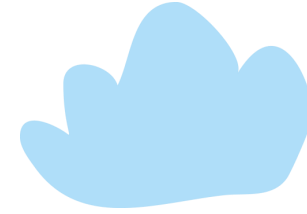
All applicants need to provide the following information on their application form:

- Name, address, DOB- **must match exactly** the details help with DWP
- National Insurance number
- Baby's due date or child's birth date
- Benefit award code found on the benefits award letter if you're over 18 – make sure you enter the exact details shown on your benefit award letter



Not a British citizen

No recourse to public funds



The Department of Health and Social Care agreed to temporarily extend the Healthy Start scheme to British children whose parent/guardian meet the financial eligibility criteria and are excluded from claiming public funds as a consequence of their immigration status, or their lack of immigration status.

You might be eligible for Healthy Start if all the following are true:

- You have at least 1 **British child** under 4 years old
- Your family earns **£408 or less** per month after tax
- You **cannot claim** 'public funds' (**benefits**) – either because of your immigration status or because you do not have an immigration status

Families with no recourse to public funds due to immigration status should apply for an application form via email. Email- Healthystartclaim@dhsc.gov.uk



<https://www.smallstepsbigchanges.org.uk/knowledge-hub/resources/healthy-start>



Homelessness

If the claimant has recently become homeless they must update the records held with DWP. Any data mismatches when applying for Healthy Start to those held by DWP will result in applications being declined.

Who you need to tell when updating your details with the DWP depends on which benefits you receive. If you get more than one benefit from the government, you'll need to report your change to more than one DWP organisation.

Reporting Changes

<https://www.gov.uk/report-benefits-change-circumstances>

You can report a change of circumstances by signing in to your [Universal Credit account](#).

Address options

They can use a '**care of address**' including;

- A family member or trusted friend
- If they are staying at a hotel/hostel they can use this address
- In exceptional circumstances they can use their local jobcentre

Activating the card

The Healthy Start card will be sent directly to the family in the post. It will be pre-loaded with the first payment.

Call 0300 330 2090- (0300- UK-wide number, up to 9p per minute from a landline and 3p to 55p per minute from a mobile)

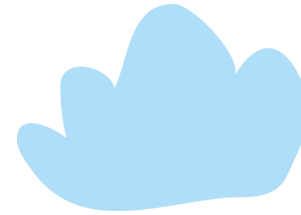
- **To activate the Healthy Start card, press 1**
- **To speak to an interpreter, press 2 or email: healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk**
- **For any other queries related to Healthy Start, or your Healthy Start card, please press 3**

They will need their:

- Healthy Start card
- Date of birth
- Client ID (located at the top of the letter that came with the card)



The card's value



The card will be automatically topped up **every 4 weeks**.

The value added to the card depends on the age of the child.

- **£4.25** per week of pregnancy (from the 10th week until the baby is born)
- **£8.50** per week for children from birth to age 1
- **£4.25** per week for children aged between 1 and 4



What can you buy with the card?

Fruit, vegetables and pulses (with no added ingredients)

- Fresh, frozen or tinned
- Whole, chopped, packaged or loose
- Fruit in fruit juice, or fruit or vegetables in water

Plain cow's milk

- Pasteurised, sterilised, long-life or ultra-heat treated (UHT).

Infant formula made from cow's milk

- Stage one only (first infant formula)
- Nutritionally complete

Does not include follow-on formula or milk ('from 6 months', or 'from 6 to 12 months').



Where can you shop?

You can use a Healthy Start card anywhere that accept Mastercard® and sells items covered by the scheme.

This includes:

- Supermarkets
- Convenience stores
- Pharmacies
- Markets
- Food banks/clubs/pantries
- Newsagents
- Butchers
- Petrol stations



The **Mastercard**® symbol is normally shown on the shop door or at the till.

Bear in mind some retailers are not classed as food retailers and may not accept the Healthy Start card for this reason.

A decorative pink cloud graphic is located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Retailers

Information for Charities and independent shops



- You must sell at least one of the Healthy Start foods and milk items.
 - You must accept Mastercard, have a card payment facility allowing chip and PIN or contactless payments.
 - The Healthy Start card is restricted to specific Merchant Category Codes (MCC). Retailers must contact their card merchant provider to find out their merchant code number and then check with Healthy Start if the code is in the currently accepted codes, emailing- healthystart@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
 - It does not incur any cost to yourselves as a retailer to accept Healthy Start cards.
 - You do not need to police the items being bought.
 - There are free resources on the NHS Healthy Start resources page for retailer's to use to advertise that you accept the Healthy Start card, including email banners, digital screens, posters, social media assets, animations, leaflets and stickers.
 - Accepting and promoting the Healthy Start card is likely to increase footfall into your store.
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How to use the card

First use

- The first transaction is made using a pin – this is provided when the card is activated.
- Subsequent payments can be contactless up to £45.
- Payments higher than the card balance will not be accepted.

Splitting payments

- A Healthy Start card can be used for split payments.
- If using a self-checkout machine, you may only be able to pay the remaining balance in cash (not by card).

Retailers

- The responsibility to purchase healthy food items at a retail store belongs to the customer. Retailers are not expected to monitor items that are being purchased with the NHS Healthy Start prepaid card.

Refunds

- The Healthy Start card can have payments refunded onto the card, in the same way as any bank card.



Why might a card be declined?

- Card not activated before use
- PIN must be used for the first transaction
- Contactless can only be used up to 4 times in a row. For the fifth transaction, the PIN must be entered
- Insufficient Funds – Check your balance using an ATM or by calling 0300 330 2090
- The retailer is not classed as a food retailer



Healthy Start vitamins

Pregnant women, women with a child under 12 months and children aged up to 4 years who are receiving Healthy Start are entitled to free Healthy Start vitamins every **8 weeks**.

Healthy Start vitamin drops are suitable from birth [Get help to buy food and milk \(Healthy Start\)](#)

Healthy Start vitamins are important because:

- 8% of children under 5 in the UK do not have enough vitamin A in their diet
- Families in lower-income groups tend to have less vitamin C in their diet
- All pregnant and breastfeeding women and young children are at risk of vitamin D deficiency (teenagers, younger women and those from ethnic minorities are particularly at risk)

What do the Healthy Start vitamins contain?

Vitamins for women 1 tablet daily	Vitamins for children 0-4 years 5 drops daily
70 milligrams of vitamin C 10 micrograms of vitamin D 400 micrograms of folic acid	233 micrograms of vitamin A 20 milligrams of vitamin C 10 micrograms of vitamin D3



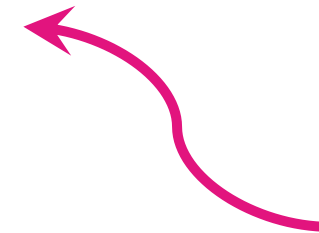
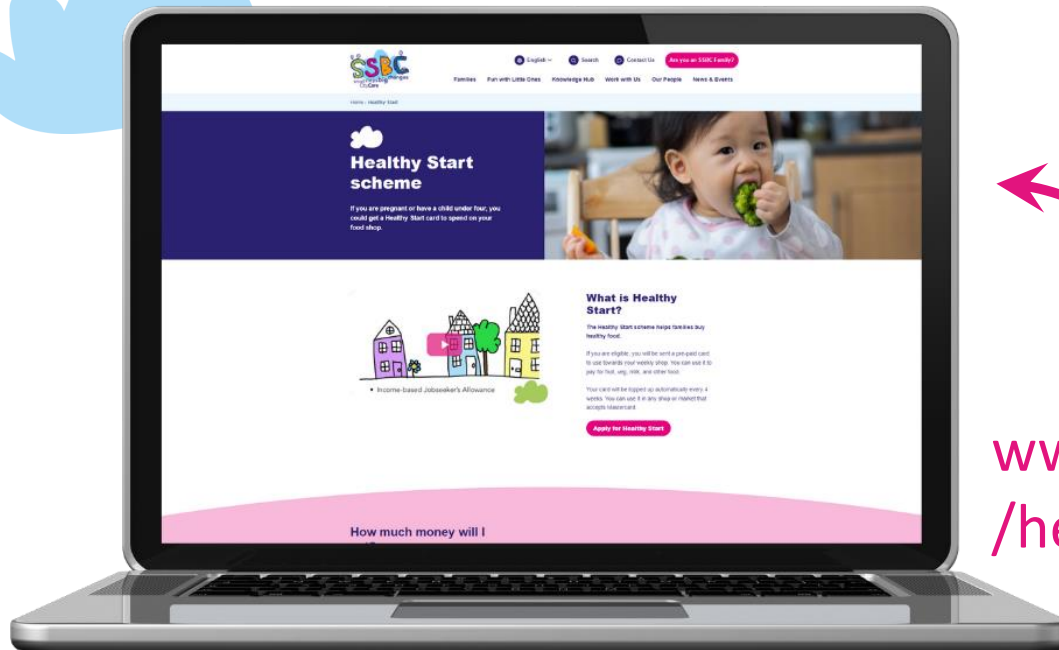
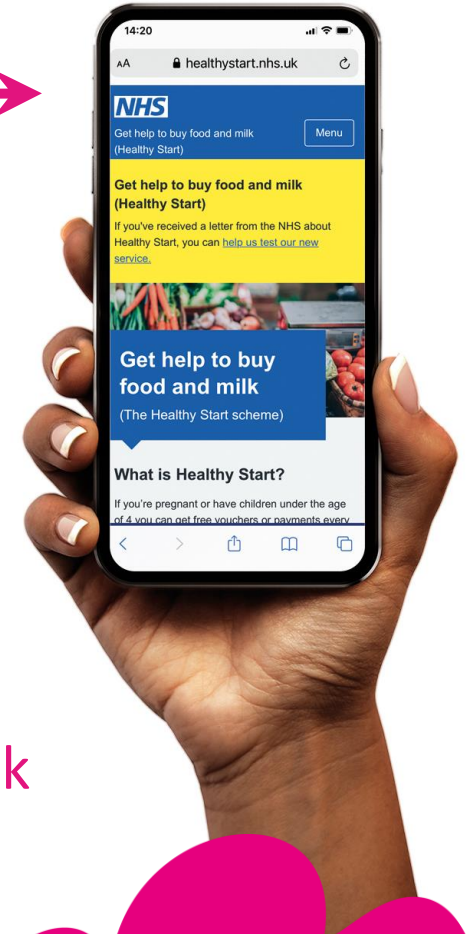
Collecting Healthy Start vitamins

- All pregnant women will be given a free Healthy Start pack at booking appointment. Funding has been secured to provide Healthy Start vitamins that will see the pregnant mum through their pregnancy, this offer is until March 2024.
- Anyone with a valid Healthy Start card can collect free vitamins from stockists by showing their Healthy Start card as proof of entitlement. The vitamins are free and no money is taken from the card.
- Vitamins can be collected from various locations around Nottingham & Nottinghamshire including Health Centres and Children Centres.
 - ✓ Find local stockists: www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/healthy-start-vitamins/locationsearch/348



Useful websites for families

Healthy Start website
www.healthystart.nhs.uk



SSBC website
www.smallstepsbigchanges.org.uk/healthy-start

Troubleshooting

Contact the NHS Healthy Start team:

- **Card queries**
Phone: 0300 330 2090
General public to activate card, get your pin, hear balance, report card lost or stolen
- **General enquiries:**
healthystartdigital@nhsbsa.nhs.uk - General inbox for stakeholder queries about the scheme, vitamins and uptake data.
healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk – For general public.
Phone: 0300 330 7010
ask a question about Healthy Start, turn off contactless payment, request interpreter (option 2), report a change in circumstances.
- **Promotional Materials:**
communicationsteam@nhsbsa.nhs.uk – Stakeholders queries about promotional materials and branding.



www.healthystart.nhs.uk/contact-us

Troubleshooting

Join the conversation – sign up to the **Healthy Start email forum**.

- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Share resources
- ✓ Get support from others working on the scheme.

Join: healthy_start-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

Once subscribed you can send a message to everyone in the group by emailing: **healthy_start@lists.riseup.net**

Advice Nottingham Centres

- ✓ Bestwood Advice- 21 Gainsford Crescent, NG5 5FH- 0115 962 6519
- ✓ Citizens Advice- 16-18 Maid Marion Way, NG1 6HS - 0808 2787974
- ✓ Clifton Advice- Clifton Cornerstone, NG11 8EW- 0115 940 5551
- ✓ Meadows Advice- Queens Walk Community Centre, NG2 2DF- 0115 9860197
- ✓ Nottingham Law Centre- 119 Radford rd. Hyson Green, NG7 5DU- 0115 978 7813
- ✓ St. Ann's Advice- The Neighbourhood Centre, NG3 4EZ- 0115 950 6867



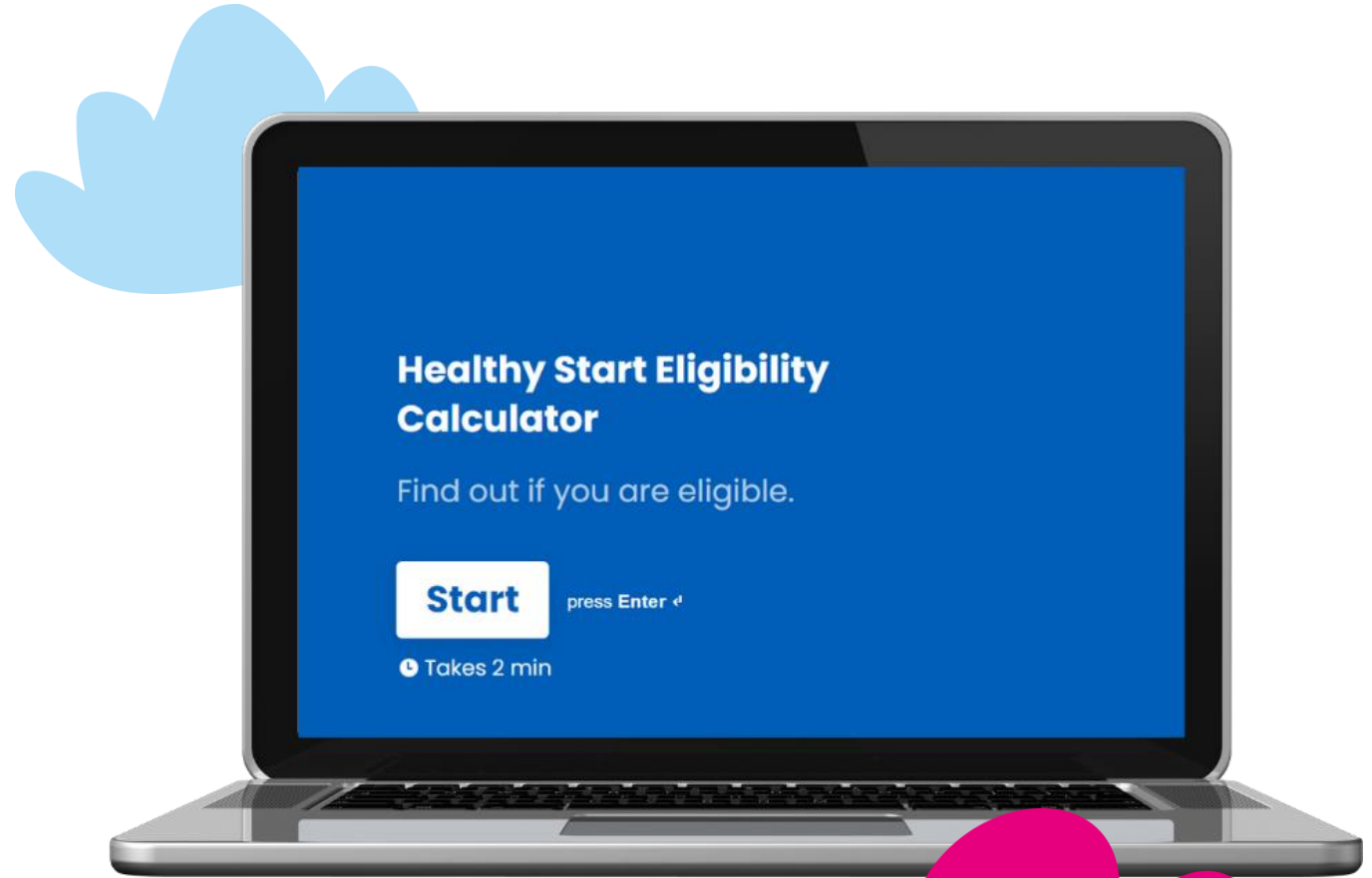
Top Tips

- Any money on the Healthy Start card that is 16 weeks old will expire and money that is less than 16 weeks will remain on the payment card.
 - All children in households should be listed under Universal Credit, applications as a result may be rejected as they do not match up against the Healthy Start checks with DWP.
 - Families claiming for an unborn child will need to notify Healthy Start and DWP that the child has been born, to allow them to continue receiving the Healthy Start payments.
 - Healthy Start payment card cannot be used to purchase food/drink alternatives where children have allergies / intolerances. Instead beneficiaries can use Healthy Start to purchase extra fruit and vegetables.
 - Keep up to date, check the Healthy Start website for changes. General inbox for stakeholder queries about the scheme healthystartdigital@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
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Useful websites for families

Healthy Start eligibility calculator

- ✓ Powered by Sustain
- ✓ 5 questions
- ✓ Takes 2 minutes to complete



<https://form.typeform.com/to/WE0ncrBs?typeform>

Healthy Start Champion

How you can help:

- ✓ Talk to people about the scheme, add promotional materials in relevant settings, waiting areas, social media platforms.
- ✓ Embed the Healthy Start promotion and eligibility checker into routine support offered.
- ✓ Signposting people to vitamin distribution.
- ✓ Appointing Healthy Start Champions in your team/organisation.
- ✓ Supporting ESOL families to use the Healthy Start phone translation service.
- ✓ Working with local food retailers to improve in-store promotion of Healthy Start.
- ✓ Join the Healthy Start email forum to ask questions, share resources & expertise and get support.
- ✓ Training staff/volunteers to support families to apply.
- ✓ If you're foodbank/club/pantry and would like to accept the Healthy Start card you will need an appropriate merchant category code. Charities normally have a code of 8398 which is on the Healthy Start approved list.



www.sustainweb.org/foodpoverty/healthy_start

Resources & promotional materials

Healthy Start resources page on the SSBC website.



www.smallstepsbigchanges.org.uk/resources/healthy-start

Guidance for professionals

- Healthy Start guidance pack for healthcare & family support professionals.
- Download from the NHS or SSBC website.

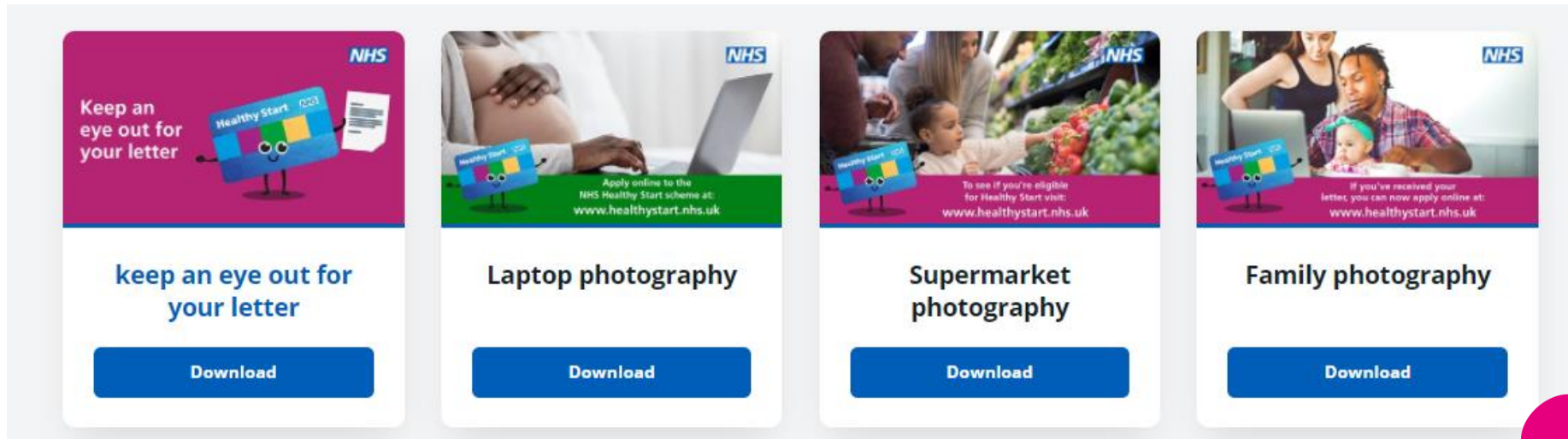


www.media.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/resources

Social media promotion

Healthy Start branded social media graphics available to download from the NHS website.

Targeting eligible families who have not yet signed up for the scheme.



www.media.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/resources

Any questions?

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<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/XGGLQNM>