

Preparing for Pregnancy



Even before you become pregnant, your health matters to your future baby. Adopt good health habits today. And take care of any health problems you have before becoming pregnant.

Remember

As soon as you know you are pregnant, get regular prenatal care.

Things to consider

Read through the list below. The more items that describe you, the healthier you may be:

- I eat a balanced diet.
- I keep physically active.
- I have my health problems under control.
- My weight is about right.
- I don't smoke.
- I don't use recreational drugs.
- I don't have a drinking problem.

Think about the following:

- Who will help you through pregnancy and with childcare?
- Do you have health insurance?
- Do you have the money needed to cover childcare and other day-to-day child expenses?
- Will you be able to take the time you need away from your job for maternity needs and childcare?

Adopt a healthy lifestyle

Each of the following tips can improve your health as you prepare for pregnancy:

- Take folic acid 400 to 800 micrograms or a prenatal vitamin daily.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet.
- Exercise 3 or more times a week and at least 150 minutes weekly.
- Get within 15 pounds of your ideal weight.

The first weeks of pregnancy are the most important time in a baby's development. Before you become pregnant:

- **Don't** use recreational drugs.
- **Don't** drink alcohol.

- **Don't** smoke.
- Get advised vaccines.

Working with your healthcare provider

Your healthcare provider can help answer any questions you may have. Do you know when to stop taking birth control pills? Are any over-the-counter medicines safe for pregnant people? You can also ask about special care you may need if you have any of the following:

- Sexually transmitted infections, such as herpes or chlamydia
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Other long-term (chronic) health problems

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