





Planning a Healthy Pregnancy

What to Do Before the Fact

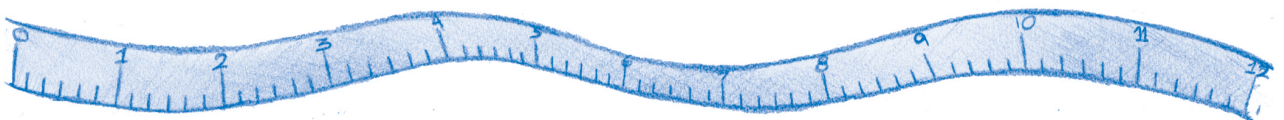
Healthy moms tend to have healthy babies. Take the steps below before you get pregnant. These steps can help your baby get off to a good start:

- ☐ Talk to your health care provider. Let him or her know you are planning to get pregnant. Follow his or her advice.
- ☐ Have a complete medical exam. This includes a gynecological exam. (That's an exam of the female organs.) Some medical problems may cause harm to you and your baby. They are:
 - High blood pressure

Caffeine Chart

Beverages	Amount	Milligrams
Coffee  brewed instant decaffeinated flavored (from instant mixes) Tea black 1-minute brew  3-minute brew 5-minute brew Cocoa beverage Cola beverage  Mountain Dew Jolt Cola	8 oz.	160 to 260
	8 oz.	80 to 120
	8 oz.	3 to 6
	8 oz.	36 to 100
	8 oz.	32 to 54
	8 oz.	56 to 73
	8 oz.	62 to 90
	8 oz.	3 to 24
	12 oz.	33 to 65
	12 oz.	54
12 oz.	71	
Foods Chocolate desserts  brownie (with nuts) cake ice cream pudding Chocolate candy chocolate kisses milk chocolate bar sweet (dark) chocolate	1 1/4 oz.	8
	1/16 of 9 inch cake	14
	2/3 cup	5
	1/2 cup	6
	6 pieces	5
	1 oz.	1 to 15
	1 oz.	20

- Heart diseases
 - Diabetes
 - Bleeding
 - **German measles (rubella)**, and some other viruses such as **CMV**
 - **Rh disease** (after the first pregnancy). This is not a problem if you get **Rhogam**. Rhogam keeps Rh disease from harming your next baby.
 - Obesity
 - **STDs** (sexually transmitted diseases)
 - **HIV**
- Keep your lifestyle healthy.
- Follow a balanced diet. Eat plenty of:
 - Whole grains
 - Green leafy and other vegetables
 - Fruits
 - Calcium-rich foods (low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese; items that have calcium added to them like some juices and breads)
 - Go easy on:
 - High-fat and junk foods
 - Refined sugars. Don't load up on Kool-Aid, for example.
 - Salt
 - *Before* you get pregnant, stop using or have less than 400 milligrams of caffeine a day. After you get pregnant, follow your doctor's advice.
- Begin or keep on with an exercise schedule.
 - Don't drink alcohol or use street drugs.
 - Don't smoke. If you smoke now, stop smoking. Ask your health care provider for help.
- All females who plan to get pregnant or are able to get pregnant should take 400 to 800 micrograms (mcg) of **folic acid** every day. Folic acid is a B-vitamin. It may prevent certain birth defects, such as **spina bifida**. For this effect, you take it before **conception** and during the early months of pregnancy. Ask your health care provider which vitamin pills you should take to get the folic acid and other vitamins and minerals you need.
- Do you use an **IUD** or "the pill"? Change your birth control method. Do this 1 to 2 months before you try to get pregnant. Let 1 to 2 normal periods happen. Your cycle needs to return to normal. Use another form of birth control during this time. **Condoms** or a **diaphragm** are good choices.
- Use condoms if you think your partner may have sex with others.
- Check that all your **immunizations** are up-to-date. These protect you from disease. Ask your health care provider about them.



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- ❑ Take care of medical problems.
 - Do you have a chronic one? That's a problem that lasts a long time, or comes back often. If so, ask your health care provider how it could affect your pregnancy.
 - Do you take any medications? Ask your health care provider if you have to stop taking any medications before you get pregnant. Follow his or her advice. Don't stop taking a **prescription** medication on your own.
 - ❑ Also, ask your health care provider before you take any medicines. That's even for ones you can buy without a prescription.
 - ❑ Consider **genetic** tests or **genetic** counseling. These are a good idea if:
 - You or your partner has a family history of genetic health problems. These are problems that are passed down through families. Examples are sickle cell anemia and cystic fibrosis.
 - You are 35 or older
 - Your partner is 50 or older
 - ❑ Read books on pregnancy. Ask your health care provider for good titles.
 - ❑ Seek prenatal care. Do this as soon as you think you are pregnant.

