

Healthy Pregnancy Checklist

What to Do

You can do a lot of things to improve the chance of having a healthy pregnancy. And you should not do some other things! Knowing what to do and what to avoid will help you and your baby stay well. Read the Healthy Pregnancy Checklist often.

- ❑ Ask your health care provider before you take any medicines, even ones you can buy without a **prescription**.
- ❑ Go to all your **prenatal health care visits**.
- ❑ Don't drink alcohol, take drugs, or smoke. When you drink alcohol, smoke, or take drugs, your baby does, too!
- ❑ Have a routine for exercise. Follow your health care provider's advice. (Read "Exercise" at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- ❑ Eat healthy foods. (Read "Eating Right" at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- ❑ Take your **prenatal vitamins** (vitamin pills) every day. These also supply the minerals you need. (Read "Eating Right" at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- ❑ Get plenty of rest.
- ❑ Wash your hands throughout the day.
- ❑ Accept all your emotions. Express your feelings to others.
- ❑ Learn to deal with stress. Experts think stress may limit blood supply to the **placenta**. The placenta is the baby's only source of oxygen and **nutrients**.
- ❑ Don't have X-rays unless your **prenatal** health care provider says it's okay.
- ❑ Avoid harmful chemicals such as paint fumes, insect poisons, and weed killers. Ask your health care provider what else you should avoid.
- ❑ When you use cleaning agents, wear rubber gloves. Make sure there is plenty of fresh air.
- ❑ Don't wear high-heeled shoes.
- ❑ Don't pick up, carry, or move heavy objects.
- ❑ Stay out of hot tubs and saunas. When you bathe, use warm water only. Never use hot water. Put a rubber mat in the tub or shower to prevent slipping.
- ❑ Don't handle cat feces or cat litter. If you have a cat, have someone else empty the litter box. Cat droppings can carry a disease called **toxoplasmosis**. (Eating meat that is not cooked enough can cause this, too.) If a pregnant woman gets this disease, the baby can be harmed. It's okay to pet your cat.
- ❑ Don't have any contact with hamsters, guinea pigs or any rodents. These animals can carry a virus that can cause severe harm to your baby.



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- ❑ Discuss your work life with your health care provider. Find out if it is healthy for you and your baby.
 - ❑ Find out if you should limit or stop having sex. Bleeding or pain during sex could be reasons. Ask your health care provider.
 - ❑ Always wear lap and shoulder seat belts when you ride in a vehicle. Fasten the lap belt as low as you can, below your belly.
 - ❑ When you travel:
 - By plane or train, get up and walk around every now and then. Get an aisle seat.
 - By car, stop at least every 2 hours and do the same.
 - ❑ Are you going far from home late in your pregnancy? Have your health care provider refer you to a provider in the area where you are going. Take a copy of your **prenatal** records with you.

