

BUMP AND BEYOND

Cobb & Douglas Public Health Pregnancy Newsletter



Prenatal Care- It is Important!

Prenatal care can help keep you and your baby healthy. Babies of mothers who do not get prenatal care are three times more likely to have a low birth weight and five times more likely to die than those born to mothers who do get care.

Doctors can spot health problems early when they see mothers regularly. This allows doctors to treat them early. Early treatment can cure many problems and prevent others. Doctors also can talk to pregnant women about things they can do to give their unborn babies a healthy start to life.

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TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY DURING YOUR PREGNANCY:

- Get early and regular prenatal care. Whether this is your first pregnancy or third, health care is extremely important. Your doctor will check to make sure you and the baby are healthy at each visit. If there are any problems, early action will help you and the baby.
- Take a multivitamin or prenatal vitamin with 400 to 800 micrograms (400 to 800 mcg or 0.4 to 0.8 mg) of folic acid every day. Folic acid is most important in the early stages of pregnancy, but you should continue taking folic acid throughout pregnancy.
- Ask your doctor before stopping any medicines or starting any new medicines. Some medicines are not safe during pregnancy. Keep in mind that even over-the-counter medicines and herbal products may cause side effects or other problems, however not using medicines you need could also be harmful.
- Avoid x-rays. If you must have dental work or diagnostic tests, tell your dentist or doctor that you are pregnant so that extra care can be taken.
- Get a flu shot. Pregnant women can get very sick from the flu and could need hospital care.

HEALTHY EATING:

- Eat a variety of healthy foods. Choose fruits, vegetables, whole grains, calcium-rich foods, and foods low in saturated fat. Also, make sure to drink plenty of fluids, especially water.
- Get all the nutrients you need each day, including iron. Getting enough iron prevents you from getting anemia, which is linked to preterm birth and low birth weight. Eating a variety of healthy foods will help you get the nutrients your baby needs.

But ask your doctor if you need to take a daily prenatal vitamin or iron supplement to be sure you are getting enough.

- Protect yourself and your baby from food-borne illnesses, including toxoplasmosis (TOK-soh-plaz-MOH-suhss) and listeria (lih-STEER-ee-uh). Wash fruits and vegetables before eating. Don't eat uncooked or undercooked meats or fish. Always handle, clean, cook, eat, and store foods properly.
- Don't eat fish with lots of mercury, including swordfish, king mackerel, shark, and tilefish.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES:

- Gain a healthy amount of weight. Your doctor can tell you how much weight gain you should aim for during pregnancy.
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs. These can cause long-term harm or death to your baby. Ask your doctor if you need help to quit.
- Unless your doctor tells you not to, try to get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week. It's best to spread out your workouts throughout the week. If you worked out regularly before pregnancy, you can keep up your activity level as long as your health doesn't change and you talk to your doctor about your activity level throughout your pregnancy.
- Don't take very hot baths or use hot tubs or saunas.
- Get plenty of sleep and find ways to control stress.
- Get informed. Read books, watch videos, go to a childbirth class, and talk with moms you know.
- Ask your doctor about childbirth education classes for you and your partner. Classes can help you prepare for the birth of your baby.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

- Stay away from chemicals like insecticides, solvents (like some cleaners or paint thinners), lead, mercury, and paint (including paint fumes). Not all products have pregnancy warnings on their labels. If you're unsure if a product is safe, ask your doctor before using it. Talk to your doctor if you are worried that chemicals used in your workplace might be harmful.
- If you have a cat, ask your doctor about toxoplasmosis. This infection is caused by a parasite sometimes found in cat feces. If not treated, toxoplasmosis can cause birth defects. You can lower your risk of by avoiding cat litter and wearing gloves when gardening.
- Avoid contact with rodents, including pet rodents, and with their urine, droppings, or nesting material. Rodents can carry a virus that can be harmful or even deadly to your unborn baby.
- Take steps to avoid illness, such as washing hands frequently.
- Stay away from secondhand smoke.

PRENATAL VISITS:

Your doctor will give you a schedule of all the doctor's visits you should have while pregnant. Most experts suggest you see your doctor:

- About once each month for weeks 4 through 28
- Twice a month for weeks 28 through 36
- Weekly for weeks 36 to birth

If you are older than 35 or your pregnancy is high risk, you'll probably see your doctor more often.

During the first prenatal visit, you can expect your doctor to:

- Ask about your health history, including diseases, operations, or prior pregnancies
- Ask about your family's health history
- Do a complete physical exam, including a pelvic exam and Pap test
- Take your blood and urine for lab work
- Check your blood pressure, height, and weight
- Calculate your due date
- Answer your questions

At the first visit, you should ask questions and discuss any issues related to your pregnancy. Find out all you can about how to stay healthy.

Later prenatal visits will probably be shorter. Your doctor will check on your health and make sure the baby is growing as expected.

Most prenatal visits will include:

- Checking your blood pressure
- Measuring your weight gain
- Measuring your abdomen to check your baby's growth (once you begin to show)
- Checking the baby's heart rate

While you're pregnant, you also will have some routine tests. Some tests are suggested for all women, such as blood work to check for anemia, your blood type, HIV, and other factors. Other tests might be offered based on your age, personal or family health history, your ethnic background, or the results of routine tests you have had.

Source: <https://www.womenshealth.gov>

New Foods with Baby – the good, the bad, and the messy

Are you thinking about starting solids with your baby? If so, congratulations! This may be one of the most fun (and messiest) milestones over your baby's first year. You may have some concerns too. It's easy to get overloaded with tips and tricks for getting your baby to eat, but your local WIC Nutritionists and Dietitians are happy to walk you through this process.

WHEN CAN BABIES EAT COMPLIMENTARY FOODS?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends breastfeeding as the sole source of nutrition for the first six months and continuing the practice while simultaneously offering complimentary foods. Babies grow and develop at their own rate, but here are a few things that will let you know that your baby may be ready to start solids. Is your little one:

- Holding their head up and showing good head control?
- Opening their mouth when food comes their way?
- Moving food from a spoon into their throat (instead of pushing it out)?
- Roughly twice their weight at birth?

If you answered yes to most of these questions, ask your pediatrician. Your baby may be ready!

HOW DO I MAKE THE TRANSITION TO COMPLEMENTARY BABY FOODS?

Starting solid foods is an exciting milestone, but it can be a tricky one too. The AAP recommends continuing to breastfeed simultaneously with the consumption of complimentary foods. Once you have determined that your baby is ready for complimentary foods, talk with your doctor and local WIC Nutritionist or Dietitian to help you plan a course of action.

Introduce nutrient-dense foods and aim for a variety of foods, flavors, and textures from all food groups. Since taste preferences develop early in life, avoid feeding infants foods and beverages with added sugars.

HOW DO I MAKE THE TRANSITION TO TODDLER FOODS?

At one year, or about the time they're starting to walk, your child's feeding schedule should include regular meals plus 2-3 snacks. Offer your toddler a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy, breast milk, or fortified soy alternatives. Make it a goal to include at least two food groups in each meal or snack. This way, you can be sure that your little one is getting a good variety. The AAP recommends continuing breastfeeding as much as your child wants to, until they're at least two years old. If you no longer breastfeed, give them one or two cups of milk a day.

If you have any questions about your baby's nutrition – including concerns about eating or drinking too much or too little – talk with your pediatrician.

Author: *Elisa Garnett WIC Nutrition Services Director*

Syphilis: Not a New Sexually Transmitted Infection

Sexually transmitted infections are on an upward trajectory, according to public health experts. Preliminary data from 2021, that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released in September, shows upticks in cases of gonorrhea and chlamydia — but outpacing them is syphilis!

Syphilis is a sometimes-fatal infection caused by a spiral-shaped bacterium that leads to a painless sore on the genital area and later a skin rash in its early stages and, in its later stages, complications ranging from neurologic problems to cardiovascular disease. About a quarter of people with a syphilis infection who don't get treated have serious complications — including death. You can get syphilis by direct contact with a syphilis sore during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Most often your doctor will test for syphilis with a blood test. Syphilis can be treated with penicillin and all sexual partners should be tested and treated.

Most concerning is the data on who is getting infected with syphilis: Case rates in women and babies rose almost threefold between 2017 and 2021 and was larger than the uptick in other sexually transmitted infections. In that time range, the number of syphilis cases in women rose from two per 100,000 people to seven per 100,000, and the number of infants born with congenital syphilis increased from 24 to 74 per 100,000 in the US.

The abrupt rise of the infection in women and babies ought to sound an alarm.

When a baby has syphilis, it's usually because it was infected while in the womb; about 40 percent of pregnancies in people with syphilis result in the death of the fetus or newborn. In the US, prenatal care involves syphilis testing, so delivering a baby while having untreated syphilis signals that the mother faced a barrier to getting prenatal care or they contracted the disease during pregnancy and did not have testing later in pregnancy.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

- Be tested for all sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV including syphilis!
- Protect yourself when you have sexual intercourse by using a latex condom every time you have sex.
- Talk to your doctor if you have questions or concerns about STIs especially if you have any unusual vaginal discharge, irritation or pain. It is also important that you have an open, honest conversation with your provider and discuss any symptoms you are experiencing and any high-risk sexual behavior that you engage in.
- Most STIs can be treated with antibiotics that are safe during pregnancy.

Source:

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/pregnancy/stdfact-pregnancy.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/2021/default.htm>

<https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/23392423/std-syphilis-sti-maternal-prenatal-care-sexually-transmitted>

Rewards & Incentives

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

With Healthy Start, all participants are **Winners!** However, we want to extend a special congratulations to our recent raffle winners for their participation with completing their Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

Congratulations to the winner of our September gift card raffle drawing...Kya B. who will receive a \$25 gift card of appreciation!!

As each of you communicate monthly with your care team, you should be given the opportunity to complete a survey; not only as a chance to be entered into our monthly drawing, but also, and most importantly, for you to be able to provide feedback on your experience with our programming/services and to let us know how we can improve. All that is required to be entered into the raffle is that you send confirmation of your completed survey to your Healthy Start Nurse or Care Coordinator within the month that you receive it, and your name will be entered. Please note that you do not have to participate in the raffle drawing and may complete surveys anonymously if you prefer.



THERE WILL BE MORE INCENTIVES TO COME, SO STAY TUNED! 😊



Client Referrals

We are also now offering gift cards as referral incentives for other eligible pregnant women you refer to our program. To qualify for this incentive, the referred woman must fully complete the enrollment process and subsequently keep her next scheduled appointment. Please let a member of your care team know if you have a friend or family member who may qualify for our program.

Events & Classes

• **Stork's Nest**

Our local Stork's Nest is offering **free**, app-based learning modules for prenatal education classes. Earn a \$10 gift card per module! Register at <https://tinyurl.com/36k55u56> using Rho Xi Zeta for question 4. Please go to online site for enrollment dates.



Healthy Start

• **Pickles & Ice Cream**

Pickles & Ice Cream offers free, live webinars covering prenatal, postpartum, breastfeeding, and newborn care. To view class dates and times, visit: <https://picklesandicecreamga.org/events>.

• **Healthy Start Support Group**

CDPH's Healthy Start Program launched a virtual support group for moms, led by a therapist. Whether you're expecting or recently had your baby, you are welcome to attend. The group meets Tuesday evenings from 6:00 - 7:30pm and Friday afternoons from 1:00pm - 2:30pm. To join the Zoom call, use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/2925874010>.



• **Baby Bumps & Dads Too**

Please join us to learn more about the Cobb and Douglas Healthy Start program and more! Other information and vendors will include Fatherhood Program, Candie Zenon - Life Coach, Kelly Professional & Industrial and Vickie Thomas - Medicare Insurance Broker. All attendees will be required to register with Goodwill Career Center. For questions contact 770-635-0523 Nov. 15, 2022 11am - 1pm

• **Inspiring Fathers Program - Online**

Inspiring Fathers is a 12-week program where dads meet weekly and discuss topics such as nurturing father/son and father/daughter relationships, Teamwork: Co-parenting between fathers & mothers, overcoming barriers to nurturing fathering and more. We formally organize partnerships with other community agencies to bring you the services and resources you need. Contact Gerald.jordan@dph.ga.gov or call 770-635-0523 Ext. 1382



Inspiring Fathers

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