



PRENATAL CARE

Prenatal Care ... Your FIRST Step To Having a Healthy Baby!

Congratulations on your pregnancy! Being a good mother starts now. As soon as you find out you are pregnant, make an appointment to see your health care provider. Prenatal care is important for each pregnancy.

Why Do You Need Prenatal Care?

Prenatal care helps:

- Check you and your unborn baby's health.
- Prevent a baby born too small, too early or sick.
- Diagnose and treat problems like gestational diabetes, infections or high blood pressure.

What Is Prenatal Care?

Prenatal care includes:

- A complete physical exam and determination of due date at the first visit.
- Regular checkups to review your baby's growth and development, your weight, your blood pressure and any medications or remedies you take.
- Education about pregnancy, labor and birth.
- Blood and urine tests. These may include tests for:
 - Blood type and iron levels
 - Sexually transmitted infections
 - Gestational diabetes
 - Birth defects
 - HIV/AIDS
- Treatment for any existing or new health problems you have while you're pregnant.

HAVE A HEALTHY BABY.

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Here are some other tips for a healthy pregnancy and baby:

- Drink plenty of fluids, including water, skim or low-fat milk, and 100% fruit juice, instead of caffeinated beverages.
- Eat healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Take a prenatal vitamin.
- Monitor your weight gain as recommended by your doctor.
- Get daily exercise. Talk to your health care provider about what exercises are appropriate.
- Attend parenting or childbirth classes.
- Learn how your child will develop during pregnancy and childhood.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs not recommended by your doctor. If you need treatment, call the Substance Abuse Treatment Referral Line at 410-222-0117.
- Don't smoke or let others smoke around you. For help quitting smoking, call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979 or visit www.myquitkit.org.

If you don't have insurance for prenatal care, you may qualify for the Maryland Children's Health Program. Call 410-222-4792 for more information.

Ask for help from your health care provider if you need it. Visit www.aahealthybabies.org to order free Healthy Pregnancy/Healthy Baby Information Kits and take free online classes.

