

# Healthy Pregnancy



If you are trying to have a baby or thinking about getting pregnant, one of the best things you can do for your baby is to plan ahead. Get your body ready for pregnancy by making healthy choices before and during your pregnancy. You can increase your chance of having a normal, uncomplicated pregnancy by following a few simple guidelines.

## Before You Become Pregnant

Being healthy before you get pregnant can help you have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby. The March of Dimes lists the following actions to take before pregnancy:

- get a preconception checkup
- get a dental checkup
- make sure you are current on your vaccinations
- eat healthy and get to a healthy weight
- take a prenatal vitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid daily
- don't smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs
- reduce the stress in your life

## During Your Pregnancy

Improving your diet and lifestyle are important for you and your baby during your pregnancy. Focus on these goals from the American Pregnancy Association:

- **Eat a well-balanced diet** – While you are pregnant you will need to eat an extra 300 calories a day. Make those calories count by choosing healthy snacks, including fruits and vegetables, breads and grains, protein sources, and dairy products.

- **Aim for an appropriate weight gain** –

The amount of weight you need to gain for a healthy pregnancy depends on your weight before pregnancy. Check with your doctor if you are concerned about your rate of weight gain, or not gaining enough weight.

- **Get regular physical activity** –

For most women, being active is recommended during pregnancy. It can reduce backaches, prevent gestational diabetes, increase your energy, help you sleep better, and improve your ability to cope with labor. Walking or swimming can usually be done comfortably by most pregnant women, but not every kind of physical activity is safe for you and your baby. Check with your doctor before starting any new exercise routine.

If you know you are pregnant, or think you might be, call your doctor to schedule an appointment, keep up all of your new healthy habits and see your doctor regularly throughout your pregnancy for prenatal care.



Eat a well-balanced diet from a variety of food groups.