



Dear Readers



GET SCREENED!

Healthy Start offers services for you when you are pregnant or between pregnancies, and for your baby from birth to age three. Services are free and are not based on income, educational background or ethnic makeup. Healthy Start services are based on a “screening”—a simple set of questions to determine if there are any risks that could affect your pregnancy and your baby’s growth or development.

Services include education and counseling in childbirth, breastfeeding, parenting, nutrition, smoking cessation, and between pregnancy care.

Find out if you qualify for Healthy Start services by saying “Yes” to a Healthy Start screening! Even if you do not wish to obtain any Healthy Start services, by completing the screenings you are helping ALL mothers and their babies in your community.

Health Tips for Expectant Mothers and New Moms

The Healthy Start program is all about having healthy babies. It’s important that expectant moms maintain good health so that their babies will be born healthy and strong. Even after their babies are born, moms should maintain a healthy lifestyle on behalf of their babies and themselves. This issue of *Blossom* gives an overview of ways pregnant women and new moms can achieve good health.

Good health is more of a “process” than a “condition.” It often requires an effort to change the way a person lives—exercising more, eating healthier food and having routine health checks. Below are some tips to help you in the process.

Step Out for Good Health

The benefits of regular exercise have been well documented. Heart health, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, weight control, stress reduction, and maintenance of bone density are some of the major benefits of regular exercise. Even during pregnancy, you may enjoy the benefits of exercises such as walking, stretching, swimming and yoga. Exercise can reduce stress, improve sleep, manage weight gain, strengthen muscles and endurance, and reduce the aches and pains of pregnancy. It’s important, however, to get approval from your doctor before beginning an exercise routine.

Eat for a Healthy You

A healthy diet is essential both during and after pregnancy. According to the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutritional supplement program, a healthy daily diet for women should consist of the following food groups:



- Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta Group (6-11 servings)
- Vegetable Group (3-5 servings)
- Fruit Group (2-4 servings)
- Milk, Yogurt and Cheese Group (2-3 servings)
- Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs and Nuts Group (2-3 servings)
- Fats, Oils and Sweets Group (these foods should be limited as they contain calories but little or no vitamins and minerals)

In addition to the food groups listed above, it’s important that you drink plenty of water,

continued...

Healthy Start

is a comprehensive program of maternal and child health services intended to improve pregnancy outcomes and help children get a healthy start in life.

Healthy Start accomplishes this through care coordination and support services that include education and counseling in childbirth, breastfeeding, parenting, nutrition, mental health counseling, smoking cessation, and between pregnancy care. Access to Healthy Start services is free to at-risk women, infants and children and is not based upon income.

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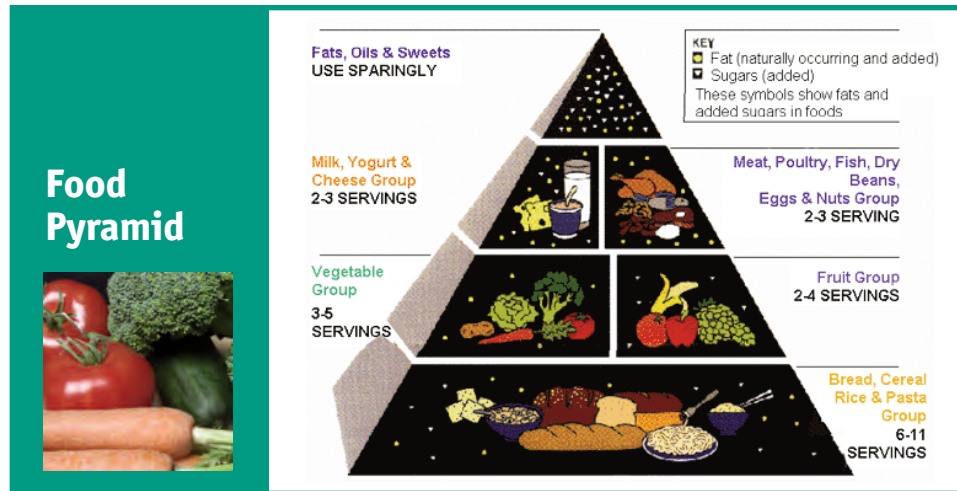
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Health Tips for Expectant Mothers and New Moms, cont.



milk, and fruit and vegetable juices. Sodas and other sugary drinks should be limited. Your doctor may prescribe prenatal vitamins to be sure you and your baby are receiving adequate nutrition. Finally, learn to cook food in the healthiest ways such as steaming, stir-frying, microwaving, broiling, baking or poaching. Frying and deep-frying are not good choices.

Get Regular Checkups

An important part of good health is to see your doctor regularly. Some key things to be checked include blood pressure, cholesterol, breast health (mammogram and self-exam) and bone density. An old

saying that “a stitch in time saves nine” is certainly true when it comes to discovering and taking care of health problems at the earliest stage.

Take Care of Emotional and Mental Needs

Being pregnant and having a baby are challenging events, both physically and emotionally. Sometimes, women may need extra support during this time. Don't be ashamed to ask for help and support from family, friends or your physician if you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed or depressed. These feelings are not uncommon and it's OK to ask for help.

Healthy Start Can Help

Healthy Start offers a number of services to help pregnant women and new moms achieve good health. Good nutrition is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle, and Healthy Start can provide nutritional information as well as referrals to WIC nutritional supplement program. If you are a smoker and need help to quit, Healthy Start offers smoking cessation classes and support. Healthy Start can also provide you with breastfeeding education and support so that both you and your baby can take advantage of the many benefits of breastfeeding. Counseling services are available if you need help with stress reduction, depression or other needs. Helping you improve your health is a major goal of the Healthy Start program.



Oral Health: A Key Part of a Healthy Pregnancy

An increasing number of studies show that good oral health plays a role in reducing risk factors for pregnant women and their babies. The evidence indicates that women with poor oral health are more likely to have preterm, low birthweight babies.

If you are pregnant, see your dentist to be sure that you have no conditions such as “gingivitis” or “periodontal disease” that could increase these risks. Your dentist can provide treatment and give you advice on how to maintain good oral health, such as healthy nutrition and plaque control.



Did You Know?

There are things that you can do even **before** you become pregnant that can help you have a healthy pregnancy and baby.

- Exercise to keep fit
- Reach a healthy weight
- Eat a well-balanced, nutritional diet
- Take folic acid supplements and eat leafy dark-green vegetables, citrus fruits, beans and enriched breads and cereals. Folic acid reduces the risk of neural tube defects in the fetus.

Good Health for Mom and Baby

WORD SEEK PUZZLE

L H H X Q O M V V I Y P A I
 D I C A C I L O F T V U G X
 E X E R C I S E I X E O O G
 P H S A G V Z S U S G R Y I
 X O N T L N N H T E G G S N
 E J R C I E I R I Y I D E G
 M B L A D U E N Y O E O Y I
 Z B J E L T R N E N S O Z V
 L B N T C H U F N E D F S I
 X O C H O L E S T E R O L T
 B T I F O C C A B O T C I I
 R N W X M U W A L E R S S S
 G H Y W S X R E L T S K U Q
 L P L X B S J T W Q H Z A D

BONE DENSITY
 CHOLESTEROL
 EXERCISE
 FOLIC ACID
 FOOD GROUP
 FRUITS
 GINGIVITIS
 ORAL HEALTH
 SCREENING
 STRETCHING
 TOBACCO
 VEGGIES
 YOGA

Where Can I Get More Information?

American Academy of Periodontology
Information about oral health for mothers-to-be
www.perio.org

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Information on many aspects of women's health
www.acog.org

Environmental Protection Agency
Information regarding mercury content in fish and shellfish
www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/advice

Florida Department of Health
Maternal and child health section has information on different topics
www.doh.state.fl.us

Food and Nutrition Information Center
Provides links to resources for pregnant women
www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/pubs/bibs/topics/pregnancy/pregcon.pdf

US Department of Agriculture
Eating plans and help with planning food choices
www.mypyramid.gov



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Avoid Substances that Could Hurt Your Baby

Alcohol, drugs and tobacco pose a health risk to an unborn baby. If you are pregnant, it is in the best interest of your baby not to use these substances.

Alcohol The effects of alcohol on an unborn baby are well documented. "Fetal Alcohol Syndrome," a direct result of alcohol use by a pregnant woman, includes mental retardation and neurodevelopmental disorders. Miscarriage and preterm birth are other risk factors. It is unknown what, if any, amount of alcohol is safe, so it's best to avoid it entirely during pregnancy.



Drugs Illegal drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamines, heroin and marijuana should not be used during pregnancy. The unborn baby will be exposed to these substances and may suffer ill effects. Even legal drugs, such as sedatives and tranquilizers, should be discussed with your physician before use during pregnancy.

Tobacco Smoking is linked to increased risks of miscarriage, stillbirth, preterm delivery and low birthweight. If you smoke and are pregnant, it is strongly recommended that you make every effort to quit. Even after the baby is born, you don't want to expose him or her to the dangers of second-hand smoke.



Easy Stretching Exercises for Pregnant Women

- Relax neck and shoulders. Drop head forward. Slowly rotate head to right shoulder, back to middle and to left shoulder. Do 4 slow rotations in each direction.
- Bring shoulders forward, then rotate up toward ears and back down. Do 4 rotations in each direction.

- Place arms at sides. Bring right arm up, extend body forward and twist to the side, as if swimming the crawl stroke. Follow with left arm. Do 10 times.
- Stand with one foot about two feet in front of the other, toes pointed forward. Lean forward, supporting your weight on the forward thigh. Change sides and repeat, doing 4 on each side.

SAY "YES" TO A HEALTHY START FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY!

Healthy Start services cover conception through maternal care for mothers, and for infancy-to-age-three children. In the early stages of your pregnancy, ask to be screened for Healthy Start services. After your baby is born, be sure to have your newborn screened for Healthy Start services at the hospital or birth center.



Did You Know?

Being at a healthy weight is especially important for pregnant women. State statistics show that in 2007, 73% of women whose deaths were "pregnancy" related fell into the "overweight" and "obese" categories.