

4 HEALTHY TIPS

IF YOU PLAN TO OR MAY BECOME PREGNANT



Did you know that many important aspects of your baby's development occur before you even know you are pregnant? Whether you are planning to or may become pregnant, it's important to start some basic healthy habits now, so that you and your baby are the healthiest you can be.

1. ENSURE YOU ARE GETTING ENOUGH FOLIC ACID

Folic acid is important because it can help prevent major birth defects of the brain and spine. Before and during pregnancy, make sure that you are getting 400 micrograms of folic acid a day. Folic acid is available in vitamin form, and in many fortified foods such as bread and cereal. In addition, a variety of healthy foods naturally contain folate.



2. AVOID SMOKING AND OTHER UNHEALTHY HABITS

Smoking can harm an unborn baby and can cause certain birth defects. No amount of alcohol is considered safe during pregnancy, and it can cause problems for a developing baby. If you need help to stop smoking, drinking alcohol, or using drugs during pregnancy, ask your health care provider for resources and support.



3. GET REGULAR MEDICAL CARE

Keep all scheduled prenatal visits and tests. Be up-to-date on all of your vaccines, including COVID-19 and annual flu shots. We recommend the pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine with each pregnancy. If you are taking any medications, talk to your health care provider about starting or stopping any medications.



4. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Try to reach a healthy weight before you get pregnant. Obesity increases the risk for several serious birth defects and other pregnancy complications. Incorporate regular physical activity into your routine, along with healthy eating.



Learn more about preventing birth defects:
nj.gov/health/fhs/bdr

You and your children may be eligible for the NJ WIC program:
Learn how to apply at nj.gov/health/fhs/wic

