

# Preconception Health and Diabetes... *It Matters*

## A Checklist for Health

Preconception health refers to a woman's health before she becomes pregnant. All women can benefit from preconception health, whether or not they plan to have a baby one day. Preconception health is about people staying healthy throughout all stages of life.

For women with diabetes who do become pregnant, preconception health is especially important because diabetes and certain behaviors (e.g., smoking) can cause problems in a pregnancy. If you are a woman with diabetes, the following are some things you can do to boost your preconception health and increase your chances of having a healthy baby:



- Talk with your health care team about
  - Family planning and birth control.
  - The importance of establishing blood glucose control before becoming pregnant and throughout pregnancy.
  - Your diet, your weight, and recommendations for physical activity before and during pregnancy.
  - Any over-the-counter and prescription medicines you use, including any dietary or herbal supplements.
- Take 400 micrograms of folic acid—a B vitamin—every day.
- Stop smoking and limit alcohol consumption to less than one drink per day.
- Stop all alcohol use if you are actively trying to become pregnant.
- Make sure that all medical conditions are under control. Along with diabetes, some other conditions (e.g., asthma, dental conditions, obesity, epilepsy) can affect pregnancy or be affected by it.
- Make sure you have had a recent Pap test and screenings for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.
- If you are overweight or obese, lose weight before becoming pregnant.
- Make healthy food choices and physical activity a part of your everyday routine.
- Stay away from toxic substances at work and at home.
- Let your health care team know if you have had any persistent feelings of sadness for 2 or more weeks.





## Your Partner's Role in Preparing for Pregnancy

The following are some ways your partner can support and encourage you in every aspect of preparing for pregnancy:

- Make the decision about pregnancy together.
- Obtain screening for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

Male partners can improve their own reproductive health and overall health when they:

- Limit alcohol consumption.
- Quit smoking or illegal drug use.
- Make healthy food choices.
- Be physically active for at least 150 minutes per week.
- Reduce stress.
- Talk with their doctor about family history and any medicines they use.

NOTE: In some circumstances, such as sperm donation or artificial insemination, the sperm donor may not be known.

**To learn more about diabetes, pregnancy, and preconception care, please visit the following sites:**

[Got Diabetes? Thinking About Having a Baby?](#)

[CDC Features: Diabetes & Pregnancy](#)

[Take Charge of Your Diabetes: Becoming Pregnant When You Have Diabetes](#)

[Pregnancy: Preconception Health—Why Preconception Health Matters](#)

[Preconception Health and Health Care: Women](#)

[Preconception Health and Health Care: Information for Men](#)