

Total Woman

Health Tips for Latinas



Don't be a victim of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases

On your mark, get set, go! 12 tips to eat healthy and feel well

Break the silence: Don't let depression take over

Total Woman: Health Tips for Latinas

Who is the Total Latina woman?

She's resourceful. She's happy. She takes care of her family. Perhaps she stays home, works or goes to school. It may not always be easy for her to juggle so many things. And if she's moved away from her country of origin to a new place, it may not be easy to function in a new environment, where not everyone speaks the same language or has the same ways of doing things. One thing for sure, the total woman is very important. And so is her health.

Being healthy is more than just not being sick. It's about feeling good. That is why it is so important that you learn as much and do as much as you can to take care of yourself totally: your physical and your mental health. **Total Woman** will help you do that.

Read carefully the following health tips. Talk with your friends about what you learned. Ask your doctor questions. Take control of your health. When you take care of yourself, it shows that you love your life and the ones you love.

Become a total woman.

Page	Subject
1	Make your doctor your friend: Take advantage of your visit to the doctor
2	Tell me what you eat ... and I will tell you how healthy you are
4	Stress
5	Bad company: Alcohol, drugs and cigarettes
6	Break the silence: Don't let depression take over
8	Love doesn't hurt: Put a stop to domestic violence
9	Vaccinations are not just for kids
10	Avoid little surprises: Plan your family
12	Don't be a victim of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases
14	Cervical cancer: A problem for Latinas
15	Seven questions you should ask about breast cancer
16	Mother's best gift: Breast milk
17	Your teeth are talking: Listen!
18	Health Resources in Spanish (back cover)

Total Woman was written by health professionals in North Carolina using reliable sources. However, it is not a substitute for your doctor's advice.



Need more information?
Call the North Carolina Family Health Resource Line
1-800-367-2229

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Make Your Doctor Your Friend: Take Advantage Of Your Visit To The Doctor

Women need to be smart about their health. For that reason, it's important to take advantage of your medical visit. Make the most of your visit to the doctor.

Follow these tips:

1. Ask to use a professional interpreter if you don't speak English well.
2. Tell your doctor about any medicines, vitamins, contraceptives, herbal teas or home remedies you use. Take the boxes, bottles or labels to your visit.
3. Let your doctor know if you are allergic to any medicine, are pregnant, nursing or have a chronic illness.
4. Know the dates you started and ended your last menstrual period, and the dates of your last Pap smear and mammogram (exam of the cervix and breasts).
5. Know your medical history (health problems your parents and relatives have had) like diabetes, cancer and high blood pressure. They can be risk factors for your health.
6. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Write down your questions before your appointment.
7. If you are embarrassed or don't want to talk with your doctor in front of your mother, partner or relative, make an appointment just for you. Or talk with your school advisor.
8. Ask your doctor to prescribe generic drugs. They cost less than name brands.
9. Make sure you understand your prescription. Ask what the medicine is for, how long and at what times you should take it, how to take it, if it has side effects and what you should do if they occur. Go over the instructions with your pharmacist when you pick up your medicine.
10. Ask about payment options. Many clinics have reduced rates or payment plans for people who don't have insurance.

Your Health And Well-being Is A Team Effort Between You And Your Doctor

Your doctor should know your medical history and be able to suggest routine exams based on your age and health. Find out the hours and phone numbers of your doctor's office and ask what you should do in case of an emergency.

Is The Treatment Worse Than The Sickness?

When medicine is not used right, it can cause health problems rather than heal them. When you buy over-the-counter medicine read the instructions well. Be sure what it is for and how much to take. Buying over-the-counter medicine in Latino stores can be dangerous. Some may not be approved for use in the United States or be out of date. Always check the expiration date, and don't mix medicines without talking with your doctor.



Tell Me What You Eat, And I Will Tell You How Healthy You Are...

(note to English reader, this is a popular Spanish-language idiom/figure of speech
“tell me ... and I’ll tell you”)

Eating is not only necessary to live, but eating well is necessary to live with quality. Eat healthy, and you have a better chance of being healthy. If you want to have more energy and reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes, some types of cancer and obesity, pay attention to what you eat. So eat smart ... and move more [keep active].

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

If your diet needs a change and you don’t know how to start, follow these easy tips:

1. Plan your meals with healthy foods and 100% fruit and vegetable juices.
2. Pick whole grain products instead of white bread, pasta and rice.
3. Replace whole milk products with light or low-fat products.
4. Avoid fried foods. Choose grilled, baked or steamed.
5. Cut back on sweets – choose fruits and vegetables instead.
6. Keep healthy snacks at hand. You tend to eat what you can reach.
7. Choose small or regular sized portions, not extra large sizes.
8. Eat at the table, don’t drive, watch TV or talk on the phone while you eat.
9. Put your plate aside when you start to feel full.
10. Don’t skip meals – you may eat too much at your next meal.
11. Eat when you are hungry, not because you’re bored, anxious or tired.
12. Keep with it and don’t get down. If you slip one day, get back on track.

*When Latinos come to the United States, changes in their diets
and lifestyles may tend to make them gain weight.*



Move! Ideas To Make Exercise Part of Your Everyday Life

- Listen to music while you exercise or clean the house.
- Park far away from the door where you work or where you go.
- Use the stairs, not the elevator.
- Dance alone or with your kids to your favorite songs.
- Turn off the TV and go out and play with your family.
- Take your children to the park.
- Work in the garden.
- Walk during your lunch time.
- Take a walk with your dog.

Ideas for Getting In Shape After A Pregnancy

- Losing weight slowly is best and it won't affect your milk production.
- Breastfeeding may help you lose weight more quickly.
- Limit soft drinks; and drinks or juices with a lot of sugar.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Eat smaller sized portions.
- Move – get out and walk with your baby.
- Forget about fad diets (“dieting”). It's better to choose one or two healthy habits and maintain them.

Take A Multivitamin With Folic Acid Daily

Folic acid is one of the best gifts you can give your body. Take a multivitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid daily and you may reduce the risk of some types of cancer, heart problems and future problems with your bones. If you're thinking about becoming pregnant, folic acid may reduce the risk that your baby is born with spina bifida or brain defects. Make sure you take multivitamins for at least one month before becoming pregnant and daily during your pregnancy. All women need multivitamins from the time we begin to menstruate. By the way, multivitamins really don't cause weight gain. So buy them today in any supermarket or pharmacy.

Invest In Your Health

For the price of a soda from a vending machine you could buy a healthy snack like an apple, banana, orange, carrots or low-fat yogurt.



Stress

It's normal to feel tense or stressed once in a while. It happens to all of us, especially if we have a lot to do or if we are working moms or students. What's important is that you control your stress in a healthy way. How do you feel when you are stressed? Does your head hurt? Do you grind or clench your teeth? Do you feel worried, angry or anxious? And when you feel that way, what do you do? Think about what stresses you out and what you could do to relax. Write down your thoughts.

When I'm Stressed I Feel:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

These Are The Things That Stress Me Out:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We All Have Different Ways Of Relaxing, What Are Your Favorites?

My three favorite ways to relax are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Ideas To Control Stress:

Mark the activities you'd like to try the next time you are stressed.

1. Go for a walk
2. Talk with a friend
3. Take a warm bath
4. Watch a fun movie
5. Read a magazine
6. Exercise
7. Clean the house (it works for some!)
8. Listen to your favorite music
9. Go shopping

Drinking alcohol or taking drugs to reduce your stress is just a false sense of relief. In the long run it damages your health. If you abuse alcohol or drugs to control stress please seek help, call the NC Family Health Resource Line 1-800-367-2229 and ask to speak with the substance use specialist.

If you are thinking about becoming pregnant, learn how to control stress. Stress during pregnancy can cause your baby to be born too early or too small to be healthy.



Bad Company: Drugs, Alcohol and Cigarettes

Alcohol And Drugs Are Dangerous Substances That Can Cause:

Physical health problems
Emotional problems
Car and job-related accidents
Poor job and school performance
Family violence and child abuse
Problems with the law

Alcohol Is A Bad Guest

Alcohol is a socially accepted drug. It is a guest at our meals, parties, meetings, weddings and baptisms. But it can be an unpredictable guest that can cause our gatherings to end poorly. Be careful with how much you drink. Alcoholism is a progressive illness that starts out with just a little drinking.

Women Can Get Drunk Faster Than Men

Live Drug-Free: Don't Experiment

Drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin and ecstasy are illegal. They reduce your ability to talk, remember and reason. They make it difficult to move, drive or make good decisions. Addiction can cause serious health problems as well as problems with your friends and family. If this isn't bad enough, you can easily become addicted. Don't experiment. Stay away from drugs.

Don't Let Peer Pressure Influence You: Proudly Say "No" To Drugs

Stop Smoking - Do It For Yourself

There are immediate benefits when you quit smoking, and not just for your wallet. Soon after quitting, your lungs start working better, making it easier to breathe. Your pulse and blood pressure will begin to return to normal. In a few days, your sense of taste and smell will improve. In the long run, it will reduce your risk of developing heart and lung diseases. Do you need help quitting? Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) It's never too late!

Secondhand Smoke Hurts Everyone

Warning For Pregnant and Nursing Women

Alcohol, drugs and cigarettes during pregnancy can cause women to miscarry and give birth prematurely. Your baby could be born too small to survive or with health problems or birth defects. If you are nursing, the harmful chemicals in cigarettes, drugs and alcohol can pass to your baby through your breast milk and make your baby sick or have growth and learning problems. Pregnant women should avoid being around smokers because cigarette smoke is a risk factor for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or crib death. If you have problems with drugs and alcohol, speak with your doctor before becoming pregnant and please do not use during your pregnancy or while you are nursing. Protect your health and the health of your baby!

If you or someone you love has problems with alcohol or other drugs, call the NC Family Health Resource Line 1-800-367-2229 and ask to speak with the substance use specialist.



Break The Silence! Don't Let Depression Take Over

Once in a while, everyone gets sad. But what happens if your sadness lasts longer than a couple of days and affects your daily life? You may be suffering from depression, a common and treatable illness. And no, depression has nothing to do with being out of control.

Latinas often don't know the symptoms of depression. We may think that we are anxious or tired and that it will go away. How many times have you heard your mom or friend say, "I'm just tired, it will pass," or "It's my nerves, nothing more. A nice tea and I'll be fine." These are some of the ways Latinas may overlook possible symptoms of depression. Sometimes we are embarrassed to talk about our problems and worries with other people. We think they will judge us. But ignoring your feelings will not help you feel better. Seek help and break the silence.

Identify The Symptoms Of Depression

Are you sad or depressed? Take this test!

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Are you sad or very down? | Yes | No |
| 2. Do you cry easily and frequently? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you lack energy to do things you like? Are you tired? | Yes | No |
| 4. Do you sleep more or less than usual? | Yes | No |
| 5. Have you gained or lost weight? Eat more or less than before? | Yes | No |
| 6. Do you feel guilty, worthless or hopeless? | Yes | No |
| 7. Do you get angry easily? Do you feel tense and irritable? | Yes | No |
| 8. Are you restless, anxious, or worried? | Yes | No |
| 9. Do you frequently have a headache, pain in the stomach or back? | Yes | No |
| 10. Is it hard to focus or make decisions? | Yes | No |
| 11. Do you want to harm yourself or your baby? | Yes | No |
| 12. Do you think about death, suicide or want to kill yourself? | Yes | No |

If you respond "yes" to one or more questions and your symptoms have lasted for more than two weeks, you could be suffering from depression. You need the help of a professional.



Depression After Pregnancy

The arrival of a baby is a reason to be happy, but without doubt it can also be difficult and stressful. Women may experience physical and emotional changes during pregnancy and after giving birth. These changes can make new mothers feel sad, anxious, fearful or confused. For many women, these feelings (called the baby blues) disappear quickly. If these feelings do not go away after more than two weeks or get worse, the woman may be suffering from postpartum depression. This is a serious but treatable condition. Consult your doctor.

5 Tips To Banish The Baby Blues

1. Don't try to be super mom. Take time to baby yourself!
2. Rest and sleep when your baby sleeps.
3. Ask your partner, family member or friend to help you clean, cook or take care of your baby.
4. Meet with other moms and talk about your experiences.
5. Learn to relax and stay calm.

Do You Know?

- Women suffer from depression almost as twice as often than men.
- Depression affects people of all races, ages and social classes.
- Every year in the United States, more than 20 million people suffer from depression.
- Latinas have slightly higher rates of depression than white women.
- Many Latinas suffer in silence and do not know there is help.
- There are many ways to treat depression that are safe during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. Talk with your doctor and follow his instructions.

Seek Help!

Depression does not only affect you. It affects your entire family. It can hurt your relationship with your partner and children. It can make it hard to study or work. There are many very good ways to fight depression. If you think you or someone close to you suffers from depression it is very important to talk to a doctor. Seek help. Do it for yourself and for the people you love.



Love Doesn't Hurt: Put A Stop To Domestic Violence

“Love is suffering” is a popular [Latino] belief. But the truth is that love should not hurt physically or emotionally. And we're not talking about love that leaves you with a broken heart, but rather about a real social problem, domestic violence.

It doesn't matter how old you are, your race, or your economical or educational level; domestic violence can happen within your family or with your partner. Domestic violence is the physical violence, psychological abuse (verbal) or sexual abuse of a person. No one deserves to be a victim of domestic violence. And you cannot feel responsible if it happens to you.

Are You A Victim Of Domestic Violence? Answer The Following Questions And Find Out

Does your partner ...

Threaten to harm you, your children, your family or pets?	Yes	No
Threaten to report you to Immigration?	Yes	No
Embarrass, insult or criticize you in public or in front of friends?	Yes	No
Not let you talk to family and friends or not let you leave the house?	Yes	No
Push, hit, strangle, kick or slap you?	Yes	No
Make you have sex when you don't want to?	Yes	No

If you answered “yes” to one or more of these questions, you could be in an abusive relationship and in danger. You are not alone. One of every three women in the United States is a victim of domestic violence and many of them find a way out.

Find Help

Call 911 if you have been attacked or feel like your life is in danger.

Call the toll free National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233, 24 hours a day.

Ask for help from a friend or close family member.

Tell your doctor, nurse, social worker, minister or priest what is happening.

Remember there are many resources available in Spanish and it's OK to ask for help.

What happens at home stays at home?

No Way! Domestic violence is a punishable crime in North Carolina. Speak out and report physical or psychological abuse.

Lend A Friend A Hand

Do you think your friend or neighbor is a victim of domestic violence? Help her!

Learn all you can about domestic violence.

Find out about services available in your community.

Share what you know with your friend.

Listen to her if she wants to talk and don't judge her.

Offer to help her if she needs it (transportation, child care, money, etc.).

Call the police immediately if you think she is in danger.



Vaccinations Are Not Just For Kids

Did you know that every year adults get sick, disabled or die from illnesses that could have been prevented with a vaccination? Vaccinations are not just for kids, they are for adults too. Talk to your doctor to find out which vaccinations you should get for your age, lifestyle or work, or call the toll free National Immunization Information Hotline 1-800-232-0233.

Worth The Bother

Getting a shot can give you goose bumps, but it is better to be safe than sorry. Vaccinations taken by injection or by mouth can be a bother but, without a doubt, they protect you from dangerous diseases. These diseases can cause blindness, deafness, breathing problems, brain damage and even death. So don't have doubts when it comes to rolling up your sleeves or opening your mouth wide when it's time to get your vaccinations.

The Vaccination Record: An Important Document

Be sure to have your vaccination records and your children's records filled out and in a safe place. An up-to-date record is needed for most child care settings and schools, as well as for certain immigration procedures. If you do not have a record and cannot prove that you had your vaccinations, you may need to get vaccinated again. Receiving one additional dose of a vaccine will not hurt you. Ask your doctor about blood tests that can show if you have received certain vaccines.

Vaccinations For Everyone

Babies – Babies usually get their first vaccinations in the hospital after birth. Keep track of your baby's vaccinations and follow the vaccination schedule for your baby's first two years so that your child gets all of her vaccines on time. Breastfeeding does not interfere with the effectiveness of a vaccine. Even though breast milk protects your baby from certain illnesses, it does not protect against some very serious illnesses.

Children and youth – Children and young people need vaccinations before entering certain grades. Even universities ask for vaccination records.

Adults – You may need a booster for some vaccines like tetanus or pneumonia. Some vaccinations, like for the flu, are offered every year.

Women – If you are planning to get pregnant make sure you are up-to-date on all of your vaccinations, especially for chicken pox (varicella). Make sure your children are too, so they don't pass any illnesses on to you. Some vaccines are not recommended during pregnancy.

National Vaccination Program, CDC
National Immunization Hotline
1-800-232-0233



Avoid Little Surprises: Plan Your Family

Planning Your Family Is The Best!

Do you dream of a family with lots of children? Or is one or two enough? The number of children and the length of time you want to wait between each pregnancy are very important things to consider. More than half of all pregnancies are unplanned and this lack of planning can be stressful and dangerous for you and your baby's health.

Choose The Contraceptive Method That Is Right For You

Talk with your partner or parents and your doctor to decide on the right contraceptive method for you. Please don't just use what your best friend suggests unless your doctor prescribes it for you too. Someone else's method may not be right for you and could put you at risk for having an unplanned pregnancy or contracting a sexually transmitted infection (STI).

The following questions can help you decide on a contraceptive method that is right for you:

- * How is your health in general?
- * How often do you have sexual relations and with whom?
- * Do you want to have children or do you not want to have any more children?
- * How effective is the contraceptive method in preventing pregnancy?
- * Will it protect you from sexually transmitted infections?
- * What effects can it have on your body?
- * Is it comfortable and does your partner like it?
- * Is it easy to use and buy? How much does it cost?

Know Your Family Planning Options

There are many types of contraceptive methods. All have advantages and disadvantages. You should talk openly with your doctor. Ask plenty of questions so you choose the method that's right for you. Ask her to explain clearly how it works, its risks and how to use it. Remember, it only works when used correctly.

A woman gets pregnant when an egg from one of her ovaries and sperm from a man's semen come together (join). Sperm that comes out of the man's penis enters a woman's body through her vagina. When the sperm and egg join, it attaches to the uterus and forms a new human being or baby.

How Much Time Should You Wait Before Having Another Child?

Doctors recommend you wait **at least two years** before becoming pregnant again. Having pregnancies very close together puts you at risk of having a premature birth or a baby that is very small. Your health also suffers and you could develop anemia, blood pressure problems or gestational diabetes. Waiting the recommended time before having your next baby gives the baby you have now all the individual attention she needs. In addition, your family can recuperate economically from the costs that come with a new baby before having another one.



Method	How it works	Chances of NOT getting pregnant
Abstinence (Not having sex)	No sperm enters the vagina.	100 % effective Only sure way not to become pregnant Prevents STDs
Pill, Patch, Vaginal Ring (Nuva Ring), Injection (Depo Provera)	Stops ovaries from producing eggs.	Very Effective
Intrauterine Device (IUD)	Doctor puts it inside the uterus to stop sperm from joining with the egg.	Very Effective
Condoms (Male and female)	Fits over the penis or in the vagina. Keeps egg and sperm from mixing.	Moderately effective if used correctly Prevents STDs
Diaphragm	A small cup covers the opening of the uterus to stop sperm from entering. Use it with cream or jelly.	Moderately effective
Spermicides (Foams, jellies or suppositories)	When placed inside the vagina before having sex, it kills sperm.	Not very effective
Sterilization (Cuts the fallopian tubes in women or vasectomy in men)	Permanent operation makes men or women unable to have children. Blocks the release of sperm or eggs.	Very effective

*Only abstinence and condoms can protect you from sexually transmitted infections.

My Partner Will Take Care Of Me: Pulling Out (Withdrawal) Method

Often, Latinas trust that the man will “take care of me” by pulling his penis out of her vagina just before ejaculation. They call this the “pulling out method” or “withdrawal.” It is not very effective in preventing pregnancy or protecting you against sexually transmitted infection. If you don’t want to become pregnant, make sure you’re in charge when it comes to using contraceptives.

The Calendar Method: Russian Roulette

Knowing which days you can become pregnant and which days you can’t (fertile and infertile days) is not a very effective method in preventing pregnancy. It is even harder to use the calendar (natural) method if your menstrual cycles are irregular. Instead of playing Russian roulette and running the risk of becoming pregnant or contracting a sexually transmitted infection, speak with your doctor and find a method that protects you.

The Morning After Pill Or The Emergency Contraceptive Pill

This is not a method of contraception but it does prevent you from becoming pregnant after you’ve had unprotected sex. The pill can be taken before or up to five days after having sex. This pill prevents the ovaries from releasing an egg, its fertilization or prevents the implantation of the fertilized egg in the uterus.

Start Planning Today!

How many children would you like to have? _____

How many years would you like between them? _____

How will you prevent yourself from becoming pregnant and getting an STI? _____

REMEMBER that you can become pregnant while you are breastfeeding or immediately after having a baby. There are many safe and effective contraceptive methods for mothers who nurse. Talk with your doctor! If you decide you don’t like the contraceptive method that you chose, before you stop using it, talk with your doctor and have her recommend another kind.

The Safe Surrender Law: For Women In Crisis

North Carolina law allows a woman who has given birth to an unwanted baby to surrender the baby legally, and without questions, to a responsible adult within the first seven days after birth. For more information call 1-800-367-2229.



Don't Be A Victim Of HIV And Sexually Transmitted Infections

Did You Know That HIV And AIDS Are Not The Same Thing?

There is a difference between being infected with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and having AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). AIDS is a condition caused by the HIV virus. A person has AIDS when her body cannot protect itself from the infections caused by HIV. HIV is a virus like the one that causes the flu or colds. Someone can be infected with HIV without knowing it, and without having any symptoms of AIDS.

How Is HIV Spread?

HIV is spread through vaginal fluids (woman), semen (man), blood-to-blood contact, by sharing needles and from a pregnant woman to her fetus or newborn.

You cannot catch HIV by breathing the same air as someone with HIV, shaking hands, through sneezes, kisses on the cheek or coughs. You cannot catch it by sharing silverware, cups or plates with someone who is infected. You also cannot catch it through insect bites or by using public pools or restrooms.

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are common and are transmitted through sexual contact, and skin-to-skin contact with infected private parts (sexual organs). There are more than 20 types of sexually transmitted infections which affect more than 13 million men and women in the United States. Fortunately, the majority are treatable.

What are the symptoms of sexually transmitted infections?

Sometimes there are no symptoms, but if you have any of the following symptoms, talk with your doctor so he can test you:

- Burning or pus on the (private parts) sexual organs or around the vagina
- Mucus or unusual vaginal smell
- Unusual vaginal bleeding – not associated with your period
- Pain during sex, urination or in the pelvic area (the area between the belly button and sexual organs)
- Pain in the groin (the area near the sexual organs)
- Sore throat in people who have oral sex
- Pain in the anus in people who have anal sex
- Sores called chancres (red sores that don't hurt) on the sexual organs, anus, tongue or throat

Symptoms can appear after several weeks, months, or even years.

12 Tips To Protect Yourself Against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and HIV:

1. Get tested for HIV and other STIs, and ask your partner to get tested too.
2. Decide how you want to protect yourself before having sex, and stick with it.
3. Talk with your partner about how to have safe sex.
4. Don't have sex without protection.
5. Make sure your partner uses the condom correctly.
6. Maintain a faithful sexual relationship with one partner who is not infected.
7. Avoid sexual contact with infected people.
8. Don't kiss anyone who has sores or blisters on the lips or mouth.
9. Don't use unsterilized needles or syringes.
10. Don't lose control – alcohol and drugs can cause you to make the wrong decisions.
11. Avoid contact with another person's blood.
12. Don't have sexual relations. Abstinence is the only method that is 100% effective in protecting you.

Your Health, Your Body – Take Care Of It!



Condoms – Your Best Life Saver!

Aside from not having sexual relations (abstinence), condoms are your best bet for taking care of your health and even saving your life. Remember that condoms are not 100% effective and that sometimes they break, so it's important to learn how to use them correctly. Lamb skin condoms do not protect you, so always buy latex condoms. You do not need a prescription to buy condoms and you can find them in any pharmacy or get them for free at your local public health department.

Common Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually Transmitted Infection	Symptoms in Women	Consequences
Chlamydia	Thick vaginal discharge, bleeding between periods, burning during urination, need to urinate frequently. Pain in the abdomen or stomach, and sometimes accompanied by fever.	If not treated, it can cause infertility (not able to have children). Can be cured with antibiotics.
Gonorrhea	Heavy, yellow vaginal discharge, bleeding between periods, abdominal pain or cramps. Sometimes there are no symptoms.	Sterility. Heart problems, inflammation in the brain, blood vessels and sexual organs. Treated with antibiotics.
Hepatitis B	Fever, headache or muscle pains, vomiting, diarrhea.	Causes serious liver problems. Doesn't have a cure, but there is treatment. There is a vaccine to prevent hepatitis.
Herpes	Sometime there are not symptoms, but the virus is contagious. Sores in the vagina, mouth or anus.	If not treated, it can damage the brain or nervous system. The virus can't be cured but the symptoms can be controlled.
Syphilis	Sores that don't hurt in the vagina, mouth or anus. Muscle pains, headache or sore throat. Swollen glands.	Blindness, brain damage or damage to the nervous system. Syphilis can be cured with antibiotics.
HPV – Human Papilloma Virus or Genital Warts	Usually there are no symptoms. Sometimes there are genital warts.	Cervical cancer. Can be detected early through regular cervical exams (Pap test).

Reproductive Tract Infections	Symptoms	Treatment
Vaginitis	White vaginal discharge, (whitish - like cottage cheese) and bad odor. Itching or burning during urination.	Treated with antibiotics.
Candida – Yeast Infection	White vaginal fluid, like cottage cheese, pain during urination or sexual relations. Itching and burning in the vaginal area.	You take a pill and apply a cream or use a vaginal fungicide suppository (to kill the fungus).
Urinary Infection	Frequent need to urinate, cloudy or reddish urine or having a bad smell.	Treated with antibiotics.

Because of the anatomy of the female body, women get more urinary infections than men.

If you are pregnant and have symptoms of a sexually transmitted infection you should talk with your doctor immediately. Don't put your baby's health and life at risk.

If you think you have a sexually transmitted infection, talk with your doctor immediately. The sooner the infection is treated, the better your chances are of avoiding serious consequences.

For more information call the National Hotline for Sexually Transmitted Diseases: 1-800-227-8922 (free and confidential) or visit www.quierosaber.org



Cervical Cancer: A Problem for Latinas

Sometimes there are no symptoms of cervical cancer until it has reached an advanced stage. This is why it is important for all women – from the time they begin to have sexual relations or turn 18 years of age – to have a Pap Smear every year. A Pap Test is a test a health professional performs to detect cervical cancer.

Latinas have the highest rate of cervical cancer compared to women of other races.

Pap Smear: A Test That Can Save Your Life

- It is fast, simple and doesn't hurt
- It doesn't affect your virginity
- It reduces your risk of dying of cervical cancer
- You can have it done at your Department of Public Health or community clinic
- Have it done even if you don't have health insurance. The test could be free or low-cost.

It doesn't matter if you have had sex with one man, several men, or have never had sex, a Pap test every year is the only way to detect cervical cancer early.

Become informed and don't be afraid to get tested.

The majority of cervical cancer cases are caused by the Human Papilloma Virus. There is a new vaccine to prevent the virus in girls and young women. Talk to your doctor about the HPV vaccine.

To get more information call 1-800-6327 (1-800-4-CANCER), visit www.cancer.gov or talk with your doctor.



7 Questions That You Didn't Dare Ask About Breast Cancer

1. Can breast cancer be fatal?

Yes. Fortunately, if the cancer is detected early through self-exam, clinical exam or mammogram it can be treated and often cured. There are many treatment options including hormone and drug (biological) therapy, radiation, chemotherapy and surgery. After treatment, many women lead happy and healthy lives.

2. Why is breast cancer one of the leading causes of death among Latinas?

The good news is that breast cancer is less common among Latinas than among African-Americans or Caucasians. Sadly, it is often diagnosed late, when the tumors are much larger and more difficult to treat.

3. Who can get breast cancer?

Any woman. Women with a close family member who has had breast cancer and older women are at higher risk. But the truth is that simply being a woman is a risk factor. All women are at risk for breast cancer, even women who have breastfed their babies.

4. What can I do to detect breast cancer early?

- * Do a breast self-exam every month.
- * Ask your doctor to examine your breasts once a year.
- * All women starting at age 40 should get a mammogram every one or two years.
- * If you are younger than 40 and have a family history of breast cancer, talk with your doctor.

5. How do I conduct a self-exam and what are the warning signs?

Every month after your period look at your naked breasts in front of a mirror. Place one arm behind your head and pat the breast of the raised arm to check how it feels. Switch arms and check your other breast. Look for a change in the size or shape, a hard lump, swollenness, color change or redness of the skin, dimples, itchiness, pain, dry skin, rash, or something coming out of your nipple. If you find any of these, make an appointment with your doctor immediately. Do a self-exam even if you are breastfeeding.

6. What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breasts. It detects changes in your breasts that you and your doctor cannot feel. It only lasts a few minutes. A mammogram does not block milk ducts, so it is safe for women who plan to have children in the future and women who are breastfeeding.

7. Where can I get more information?

To learn more about how to prevent breast cancer, treatment options and exams, call the Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). If you do not have insurance ask about free exams or financial assistance.

A breast self-exam can save your life – give yourself one every month



A Mother's Best Gift: Breast Milk

The best gift for a newborn is mother's milk. It is the perfect food for a growing baby during its first months. Breastfed babies have less gas, constipation, diarrhea and infections. They also are less likely to develop allergies, asthma and obesity. Mother's milk is free and convenient. You don't have to warm it or wash bottles. Breastfeeding also helps create a strong bond between mother and baby. Another benefit is that mothers who breastfeed may lose weight more rapidly and reduce their risks of developing breast and ovarian cancer.

Artificial milk does not give your baby all the nutrients and protection of breast milk.

Learn to Nurse Like An Expert

1. Request that your baby be put to breast right after delivery and ask if they have a lactation consultant or breastfeeding counselor at the hospital. She can show you how to nurse and answer your questions.
2. Have patience and don't rush – you and your baby are learning together.
3. Drink more water – you should be well hydrated. It is best if you limit the amount of caffeine you consume to 2 or 3 cups a day (coffee, soda, tea or chocolate).
4. Maintain a healthy diet, rich in fruits and vegetables.
5. Avoid alcohol – it can affect your baby's development.
6. Don't smoke, or allow others to smoke near your baby. Nicotine irritates your baby and secondhand smoke increases the risk of crib death.
7. Don't take medications without talking to your doctor
8. Return your baby to her crib or bassinet after nursing at night to reduce the risk of crib death.
9. Talk to your doctor or WIC counselor if your breasts are tender or hurt.
10. Learn how to hand express breast milk or use a manual or electric breast pumps before returning to work. Your WIC program staff can teach you.
11. Try to rest as much as possible.
12. Choose a peaceful place to nurse. Relax and enjoy your baby.

The American Pediatrics Academy recommends breastfeeding for at least for 12 months.

5 Misconceptions About Nursing

1. **Myth:** Nursing frequently reduces milk production.
Fact: The more you nurse, the more milk you produce. Nurse your baby whenever she wants.
2. **Myth:** Drinking beer helps you produce more milk
Fact: Too much alcohol is not good for you and your baby. Beer doesn't help to produce more milk but nursing more often will.
3. **Myth:** Women with small breasts do not produce enough milk to nurse a baby.
Fact: Breast size is not important. A healthy diet and frequent breastfeeding are important.
4. **Myth:** You can't get pregnant while you are nursing.
Fact: Nursing is not a contraceptive. Even though breastfeeding can decrease or stop your period, many women become pregnant while breastfeeding. If you do not want to become pregnant, ask your doctor to prescribe a contraceptive method that is safe while nursing.
5. **Myth:** My baby doesn't get full and wants to breastfeed every two hours.
Fact: It is normal for babies to breastfeed every 2 hours. If it is tiring, you can pump breast milk into a bottle and ask someone to feed her. Make sure that your baby is breastfeeding well before you introduce the bottle.



Your Teeth Are Talking: Listen!

Taking care of your teeth is a step in the right direction toward good health. Your teeth say a lot about how you care for yourself. So listen to them. Brush your teeth every day to protect them from cavities, periodontal disease (gum disease) and bad breath. Make sure your smile says something good about you!

Smile And Show Those Teeth! Advice For A Healthy Mouth:

1. Brush your teeth for at least 2 minutes, twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
2. Use a toothbrush with soft bristles. Brush all your teeth and your tongue.
3. Use dental floss every day to get rid of the food that gets stuck between your teeth.
4. Don't smoke. Smoking and tobacco can cause gum problems and mouth cancer.
5. Visit your dentist every 6 months for a cleaning and to make sure you don't have any problems.
6. Make an appointment with your doctor right away if you have a toothache or bleeding gums. Don't delay!
7. Let your dentist know if you are pregnant so she can protect you from the X-rays.

Take Care Of Your Teeth Today And Reduce Your Chances Of Dental Problems Later

Keep Your Mouth Healthy During Pregnancy

During pregnancy, hormonal changes and poor care of your teeth make you more likely to develop periodontitis (inflammation or bleeding of the gums). This can cause your baby to be born too soon or too small to be healthy.

How To Use Dental Floss

1. Cut off a long enough piece (40 to 60 cm.).
2. Wind the ends of the floss around the index fingers of both hands and pull firmly.
3. Gently press the floss from top to bottom between the teeth forming a "C" and gently touching the gums.
4. Use another part of the floss every time you clean a new space.
5. Floss every day to clean the places your toothbrush can't reach and avoid gum disease.

When To Toss Your Toothbrush? The American Dental Association Recommends You Throw Away Your Toothbrush Every 3 Or 4 Months



Resources in Spanish

Drug, Alcohol and Smoking Addiction

- NC Family Health Resource Line
1-800-367-2229 (Ask to speak with the substance use specialist)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Drugs
www.cdc.gov/spanish/drogas.htm

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)
www.quitnownc.org (only in English)

Cancer

- National Cancer Institute
1-800-422-6237 (1-800-4-CANCER)
www.cancer.gov/espanol
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Cancer
www.cdc.gov/spanish/cancer/default.htm

Prenatal Care/Pregnancy and Infant Health

- NC Family Health Resource Line
1-800-367-2229 (English and Spanish)
- The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation
www.NCHealthyStart.org

Nacer Sano – March of Dimes
www.nacersano.org

Depression – Mental Health

- Mental Health Association of North Carolina
1-800-897-7494
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Mental Health
www.cdc.gov/spanish/mental.htm

Poisoning

- North Carolina Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222

Family Planning

- Planned Parenthood
1-800-230-7526
- Birth Control and Contraception – Medline Plus in Spanish
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/birthcontrol.html

Women's Health / Lactation

- National Women's Health Information Center and Federal Help for Lactation
1-800-994-9662
- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Women
www.cdc.gov/spanish/mujer.htm

Dental Health

- NC Family Health Resource Line
1-800-367-2229 (English and Spanish)
- American Dental Association
www.ada.org/public/espanol/index.asp

Vaccinations

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Vaccination Hotline
1-800-232-0233
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Vaccinations
www.cdc.gov/spanish/inmunizacion.htm

HIV and AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections

- American Social Health Association –ASHA
1-800-227-8922
www.quierosaber.org

Domestic Violence

- North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence Hotline
1-888-232-9124
www.nccadv.org

National Line on Domestic Violence
1-800-799-7233
24 hours

North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation

1300 St. Mary's Street, Suite 204, Raleigh, NC 27605
Telephone: 919-828-1819 Fax: 919-828-1446
Fax to order materials: 919-824-7470

www.NCHealthyStart.org
Spanish and English

