

# Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Baby

## Top tips to get healthy before and stay healthy during your pregnancy

Are you considering having a baby? Or perhaps you are already pregnant? Taking steps to be as healthy as possible before or during pregnancy will be beneficial to you and your baby. Below are some general guidelines for preparing yourself to welcome a new life into the world.

### Speak with your OB/GYN.

Although you'll need to choose an obstetrician or midwife while pregnant, it is beneficial to speak with an OB/GYN when you decide to start a family or as early in your pregnancy as possible.

"Discussing health conditions and considerations before pregnancy, or as early in the pregnancy as possible, can reduce stress and improve care," explained Michael Grossman, MD, Chief of OB/GYN at Holy Family Hospital. "Whether you have medical conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure, concerns about a previous pregnancy, take supplements or medicines, even non-prescription, or have dietary or lifestyle questions, an OB/GYN can help you understand the implications of these health factors on your pregnancy."

### Take a daily prenatal multivitamin.

During pregnancy, it is especially important to take in the vitamins and minerals that your body needs. To ensure you are getting enough of these nutrients, however, it is recommended that you take a daily prenatal multivitamin as soon as you try to become pregnant.

"Folic acid and calcium are two key nutrients," explained William Edwards, MD, OB/GYN. "Folic acid is a B vitamin responsible for making new cells in the body, and it plays a major role in brain and spinal cord development. Calcium is essential for healthy bone growth. Consult with your OB/GYN to determine the best dose for your personal health needs." Both of these nutrients are also found in food. Folic acid is found in fortified breakfast cereals, beans, and green vegetables, such as spinach and broccoli. Calcium-rich foods include dairy products, such as cottage cheese and yogurt.

Holy Family Hospital works in partnership with your OB/GYN to provide additional support and comfort throughout your pregnancy.

"By following these recommended health steps and involving your caregivers and families in your journey to motherhood, you can create a healthy foundation for your pregnancy and beyond," said Dr. Grossman. "We're here to help you every step of the way."

### Avoid habits that can be harmful to you or your baby.

Your health, and your baby's, is affected by more than just the foods that you eat. "Talk with your primary care physician about cutting out harmful habits, such as smoking," explained Javed Siddiqi, MD, OB/GYN. "Mothers who smoke have an increased risk of delivering babies who weigh less and/or are born early."

### Maintain your weight before and during pregnancy.

"Research has shown that maintaining your weight before pregnancy can help prevent complications and ensure a healthy pregnancy," explained Shamini Kirupananthan, MD, OB/GYN. "Your OB/GYN will help you monitor your weight during pregnancy to assure that the levels are appropriate for your health and your baby's health."

### Exercise for strength and stress management

Exercise can help you achieve or maintain a healthy weight. Good options include low-impact exercise such as swimming and walking. "Yoga can also be helpful to build strength, improve balance and flexibility, and reduce stress, which are all important during pregnancy," explained Michel Lurette, MD, OB/GYN. "Many yoga practices can also be helpful during the birthing process."

### Talk to others.

"The entire experience of motherhood – from planning to start a family to welcoming your baby (or babies) into the world – is personal. As you physically and mentally prepare yourself for this special time in your life, speak with other women who can support you during the transition from pregnancy to motherhood," suggested Lan Tran, MD, OB/GYN.

### Treated like Royalty

"When our daughter was born at Holy Family Hospital, my wife and I felt like royalty. From the moment we arrived, everyone made us feel welcomed. We were overwhelmed with kindness. We personally appreciate the one-on-one time and the education provided. It really gave us the confidence we needed to bring our daughter home. I will be thinking of your endless kindness."

- New father, Michael

