

STAYING HEALTHY DURING PREGNANCY

As a woman, being pregnant affects every facet of your life, particularly your health. So if you are pregnant, taking care of yourself has never been more important than it is now.

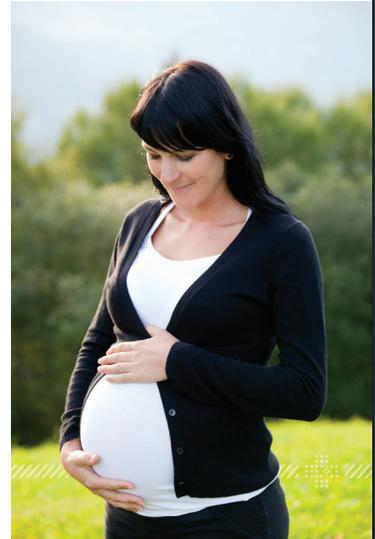
Of course, there is a host of literature about what women should and shouldn't be doing during pregnancy. Ultimately, however, staying healthy during pregnancy depends on you and your general health practices, so it's crucial to arm yourself with information about the many ways to keep you and your baby as healthy as possible.

A key to protecting the health of your unborn child is to get regular prenatal care. If you think you're pregnant, you should call your health care provider immediately to schedule an appointment. This first visit is where you and your physician will determine your delivery date and begin the process of planning for a successful pregnancy.

Below are some basic additional steps to a healthy pregnancy, many of which are simply common-sense practices for general health and wellness that take on new significance when you are expecting:

- Improve your nutrition and monitor your food intake. You may be eating more, so you have to eat healthy and stay hydrated.
- Take prenatal vitamins.
- Quit smoking, stop drinking alcohol and cut back on or stop ingesting food and drinks containing caffeine.
- Eliminate environmental dangers such as tripping hazards or physical barriers.
- See your dentist. Untreated gum disease has been linked to preterm birth.
- Take care of your emotional health and reduce stress in any way possible.
- Exercise regularly, and get plenty of rest.

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