

## Your best health before pregnancy.

Choices you make every day can affect your body. This includes what foods you eat and how much activity you do, which can affect your weight. A healthy weight and body are important when trying to have a baby. Healthy habits like eating right, moving more, and taking a multivitamin can help you have a healthy pregnancy.

## Healthy Weight

A healthy weight can be very different based on your height and gender. When your weight is too low or too high, it can make it hard to get pregnant or have a healthy pregnancy. Instead of thinking about healthy weight as a number in pounds, your provider might talk to you about your Body Mass Index (BMI). This will help see if you are at a healthy weight based on your height. Scan this QR code to calculate your BMI:



BMI Calculator

**Underweight**  
Less than 18.5 BMI

**Healthy Weight**  
18.5-24.9 BMI

**Overweight or Obese**  
BMI greater than 25+



**Physical activity helps increase your heart rate.** Some activities, like walking or running, are called cardio exercise. Try to do some cardio with activities to make you stronger, like lifting weights, or make you more flexible, like yoga or stretching. All of these activities can help your heart and body.

All people should try to exercise for at least 150 minutes a week – that's about 30 minutes, five times a week. If you are overweight or obese, more activity can help you reach a healthy weight. Exercise can also help you have more energy and lower stress.



**Food is important for a healthy body!** What you eat and how much you eat are important to reach a healthy weight. Your body needs many different foods to get all the vitamins you and a new baby would need. Consider eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk, cheese or yogurt, and proteins like chicken, eggs and beans. The best types of food are low in added sugars, low in salt or sodium, trans fats, and cholesterol. Most foods have nutrition labels that can help you find this information. Talk to your health care provider and use the MyPlate QR code for more help.



MyPlate.gov

## Healthy Choices for You and Baby



**Get enough vitamins!** Even if you make good food choices, most people need to take a daily multivitamin. If you want to get pregnant, take a prenatal multivitamin with folic acid (or folate), iron, calcium, and DHA.

- **Iron supports baby's growth.**
- **DHA is good for baby's brain development.**
- **Folic Acid helps prevent problems with the baby's brain and spinal cord.**



**Have a healthy body!** If you already have a baby, it is good to think about when you want to get pregnant again. This is called birth spacing. To give your body and your baby the healthiest pregnancy, you should wait 18 months between pregnancies. If you do not want to get pregnant, talk to your provider about options like birth control, a long term contraceptive like an interuterine device (IUD), or surgery.



**Have a chronic disease?** Knowing is power! Getting tested for chronic disease is very important if you want to get pregnant. About one in four people ages 18-44 have a chronic disease like diabetes, and some chronic diseases can make it hard to get pregnant or the disease can get worse during and after pregnancy.

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## Diabetes

Anybody can get diabetes, so it is important to be tested. Diabetes is a disease where your body can't process sugar and starch correctly, so sugar builds up in your blood. There are a few different types of diabetes, like Type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is when your body doesn't make enough insulin.

Gestational Diabetes (GDM) is when your body can't make enough insulin during your pregnancy. GDM can turn in to Type 2 diabetes. If a birthing person had GDM during pregnancy, they should get tested for Type 2 diabetes by the time their baby is 12 weeks old. They should also get retested every one to three years after even if a test is negative.

## Anemia

Anemia is very common in kids and females. Anemia is when you don't have enough healthy red blood cells in your body. You will often feel tired, cold, dizzy, or find it hard to catch your breath. Anemia in pregnancy can also cause depression. Having too little iron in your diet causes the most common type of anemia.

The right amount of iron in your blood is important for a healthy pregnancy. Getting tested for and taking care of anemia before and during pregnancy can help prevent depression, tiredness, breastfeeding trouble, and problems when delivering your baby.

Talk to your provider to see if you need treatment for anemia. This can look like taking iron pills and eating iron-rich foods, like red meat, eggs, beans, spinach and broccoli.

## Diabetes Risk Factors

You are more likely to get diabetes if you are:

- Overweight or obese.
- Have a family history of diabetes.
- Delivered a baby weighing more than 9 pounds.
- Have prediabetes.
- Older than 25 and are Black, Indian, Asian, Hispanic, or Latino, or Pacific Islander.
- Had gestational diabetes during pregnancy.

