

## Planning a Pregnancy?

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Newport Family medicine gets excited about pregnancies and babies. Three of our doctors deliver babies and all of the practitioners enjoy newborn and pediatric care. Here are some tips to get you started.

### IN GENERAL:

Take 800 micrograms (.8 milligrams) of folic acid (folate) daily. Although fruits, vegetables, and grains are rich in folate, it's hard to get a consistent amount in the diet. It is found in almost all multivitamins or can be purchased separately. It is best absorbed on an empty stomach. Folic acid decreases the risk of spina bifida and anencephaly—birth defects in which the spinal cord fails to fuse properly.

Except for folic acid and what your doctor prescribes: Do not take megavitamins. For example, more than 5,000mg of Vitamin A causes an increased risk of cleft palate- a facial deformity.)

Stop smoking and minimize alcohol. Be moderate with your use of caffeine.

Avoid recreation drugs.

Eat a well-balanced diet and exercise regularly.

### TALK WITH YOUR PRACTITIONER IF:

You have not had chickenpox or German measles (or if you haven't been immunized for these illnesses).

You will be 35 or older before the baby is born.

There are birth defects in the family such as Down's syndrome, hemophilia, spina bifida, cystic fibrosis, severe anemia, or thalassemia, mental retardation, or other conditions, which may run in the family.

You have ongoing medical problems or are taking medications long-term.

You have had a previous miscarriage.

You have any questions.



## GETTING STARTED

If you are on the pill, it's best to stop the pill a month or two before actively trying to conceive—establish one or two normal cycles.

The average time it takes to get pregnant is six months. Be patient. See your doctor if it hasn't happened in that time frame.

Most women ovulate 12-14 days before their period. Fertilization generally occurs with intercourse timed 1-3 days before ovulation or the day of ovulation. To maximize the chance of pregnancy in a 28-day cycle, have sex on Day 10, 12, 14 and 16 of your menstrual cycle. If you're not pregnant after several months, you may want to use an ovulation predictor kit available from a drug store.

## IT'S POSITIVE! CONGRATULATIONS!

Home pregnancy tests are very accurate. We trust them. But do call us if you have questions. Also, call if you have unusual discomfort or bleeding.

Continue your multivitamins or prenatal vitamins.

Call the office to schedule an O.B. consult when you have a positive pregnancy test.

If you have a well-established exercise routine before pregnancy you can continue to exercise moderately during pregnancy. Take care not to get overtired, dehydrated, or overheated. If you haven't been exercising, start very gradually.

There aren't many restrictions in pregnancy, but you should avoid hot tubs and saunas. And someone else gets to clean the litter box. Toxoplasmosis—a fungal infection which can adversely affect a pregnancy—can be acquired from handling cat feces.

Three of our physicians (Dr. Laughlin, Dr. Shi and Dr. Somers) deliver babies and have a combined 36 years of obstetrical experience. We can provide prenatal care in our office and deliver your baby at Hoag, or we can refer you to an obstetrician who also delivers at Hoag Hospital. Whether we deliver your baby or not, we all love caring for infants and older children in our office.

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This handout provides a general overview on this topic and may not apply to everyone. To find out if this handout applies to you and to get more information on this subject, talk to your family doctor.

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