



# MDwise

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## Quick Tips: Healthy Pregnancy Habits

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### Getting Started

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Here are ways you can take care of your own and your baby's health during pregnancy.

- See your doctor or midwife regularly.
  - Visit your doctor or midwife as soon as you suspect you are pregnant.
  - Go to all of your prenatal checkups.
  - Get treatment for all infections. Call your doctor or midwife if you have signs of an infection during pregnancy, such as a fever or unusual vaginal discharge.
- Eat a balanced diet.
  - Choose foods from each food group: grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, and protein. Protein includes meat, beans, and eggs.
  - Get enough folic acid. Take a daily vitamin supplement that contains 0.4 mg to 0.8 mg (400 mcg to 800 mcg) of folic acid.
  - Remember that your nutritional needs increase during pregnancy. If you are not sure about what or how much to eat, talk with your doctor or midwife.
- Be active.
  - Get regular aerobic and strength-conditioning exercise. Swimming, walking, and arm exercises are the safest activities.
  - Don't exercise if you're not feeling well or if the weather is hot.
  - Avoid risky sports like horseback or motorcycle riding, water-skiing, and scuba diving.
- Get plenty of rest.
  - Go to bed earlier than usual and get up later, if you can.
  - Take naps, unless napping makes you sleepless at night.
  - Put your feet up and rest as often as you can during the day.
  - Get help with housework and other duties whenever possible.
- Think twice about medicines.
  - Talk to your doctor or midwife about medicines that you use, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Some medicines have been linked to birth defects.
  - Check with your doctor or midwife before you take any new medicine, vitamin, or supplement.
- Stay away from harmful substances.

- Do not smoke. Smoking increases the risk of low birth weight and fetal death. If you smoke, talk with your doctor about ways to quit.
- Don't drink alcohol. No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy.
- Avoid strong chemicals such as paints, household cleaners, and pesticides.
- Think safety first.
  - Take care to avoid falling. Unstable joints, your expanding belly, and your altered center of gravity can make you more likely to fall.
  - Avoid climbing on ladders or standing on anything that is high or wobbly.
  - Always wear your seat belt when you're in a motor vehicle or a plane.
  - Avoid things that can make your body too hot and may be harmful to your baby, such as a hot tub or sauna. Or talk with your doctor before doing anything that raises your body temperature. Your doctor can tell you if it's safe.
  - Avoid roller coasters and other rides that are fast or jarring.

## Credits

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