

Take The Pregnancy Health Quiz

The first few weeks of a pregnancy are essential to a growing baby. During this time, the brain and other organs begin rapidly forming. Poor lifestyle decisions such as obesity, smoking, drinking alcohol, and drug use are not only bad for your own health; they can be extremely harmful to a growing baby. As well, certain chronic diseases and infections can also negatively affect a pregnancy.

The good news is that by having a healthy body and lifestyle before even trying to get pregnant, you can greatly improve your chances of having a trouble free pregnancy and a healthy baby. Before you begin trying to become pregnant, take this important health quiz, and follow the helpful tips that will guide you to a healthy pregnancy!

1. Is your weight in check?

Keeping your weight in the normal range is one of the best ways to ensure a healthy pregnancy. Excess weight can cause a variety of problems during pregnancy including high blood pressure and diabetes. Being underweight can also lead to difficulties. Women who are too thin may have difficulty getting pregnant and are at greater risk of delivering low birth-weight babies.

2. Are you exercising?

Exercise is important for all women at every time in their lives. This is true even during pregnancy. The type and quantity of exercise that you can do safely during pregnancy depends on how healthy you are before you become pregnant. By starting an exercise programme before pregnancy that improves heart and lung function and strengthens muscles, you will improve your body's ability to handle the physical stresses of pregnancy, labour, and delivery.

3. Do you have a healthy diet?

You and your baby will have a healthy supply of the nutrients that you both will need if you begin eating right before you become pregnant. While important throughout all of a woman's life, a balanced diet is crucial during pregnancy. The food that you eat will be the main source of nutrients and energy for your growing baby.

One nutrient that is very important to the normal development of a baby is folic acid. Consumption of this B vitamin helps prevent neural tube defects (abnormalities of the brain, spine, and their coverings). Folic acid is also believed to help prevent cleft lip, congenital heart disease, and other birth defects.

4. Are you limiting caffeine?

While caffeine in small quantities (less than 3 cups of coffee per day) is considered to be safe during pregnancy, large quantities of the stimulant have been linked to increased risk of miscarriage. As well, some medical studies have shown that a woman's fertility decreases with increased consumption of caffeine.

5. Have you stopped smoking and drinking?

Most women know that heavy use of alcohol or tobacco products can have very harmful effects on a baby's health. But many women don't know that these substances can also significantly lower fertility.

If you smoke or drink alcohol, the time to quit is before you try to become pregnant. Quitting these bad habits requires patience and plenty of support. Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. The effort will certainly be worth it!

6. Have you discontinued any use of illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications?

Like smoking and drinking alcohol, drugs can be very dangerous during pregnancy. Make sure to consult with your doctor about all drugs and medications that you are taking.

7. When was your last visit to the doctor?

A pre pregnancy checkup is a very smart idea. Your doctor will ask about your medical and family history, medications, past pregnancies, diet and lifestyle. Be honest when answering these questions, as your answers will help determine if you need special care during pregnancy. You will also be able to seek advice or discuss any concerns that you may have.

8.Are you under stress?

While almost every woman is under a certain level of stress with day-to-day life, its important to minimize unnecessary tension and conflict before becoming pregnant. High levels of stress are linked to infertility, pre-term labor, and low birth weight babies.

9.How is your environment?

Certain substances found in the home or on in the workplace can make it more difficult to conceive or could harm a fetus. If you are planning a pregnancy, take a look at what is around you. Certain chemicals used in the home or garden or for hobbies might expose you to harmful substances. Ask your employer whether you might be exposed at work to toxic substances such as solvents, lead, or radiation. Discuss your level of exposure to these substances with your doctor.

10.Is your partner healthy?

There has been growing evidence that if your partner smokes, drinks, or uses drugs, it can lower his fertility, damage his sperm, and have a harmful effect on a fetus. As well, secondhand smoke is harmful to a developing baby before and after he or she is born. Before a pregnancy is the time for both you and your partner to quit these bad habits.

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