

Preparing for Pregnancy

What is prenatal care?

Seeking prenatal care early and regularly during pregnancy can improve the chances of having a healthy baby. Without prenatal care, the risk of complications rises, which include gestational diabetes and preeclampsia. Babies born to mothers who do not receive prenatal care are **three times** more likely to have low birth weight and experience birth complications.

Important Terms to Know:

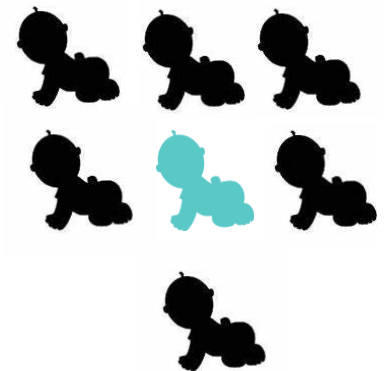
Gestational Diabetes is a type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy in women who didn't have it before.

Preeclampsia marked by sudden spike in blood pressure and other health concerns such as, blood in urine and swelling, also become more common.

Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy

- Maintain a healthy weight before pregnancy. Obesity can increase a baby's risk of congenital heart defect by **15%**.
- Get prenatal care early. Screening early during pregnancy for conditions can prevent complications for mom and baby.
- Most pregnant women need only about 300 extra calories per day during the last six months of pregnancy.
- Aim for at least **150 minutes** of physical activity each week. This can reduce preeclampsia, risk of having a cesarean section, reduce length of labor and recovery.
- Taking 400 micrograms of folic acid daily can reduce the risk of major birth defects by **28%-35%**.
- Eating fruits and vegetables increases fiber intake and lowers risk of gestational diabetes by **26%**.

1 in 7 infants in Bexar County are born to women receiving late or no prenatal care.



Take Action Today

Schedule a Prenatal Care Visit	UniversityHealth.com/PrenatalCare
Connecting Kids to Coverage	UniversityHealth.com/CKC
Learning class at Robert B. Green	UniversityHealth.com/CenteringPregnancy
Find Community Resources	www.uhsa.findhelp.com

Connect with University Hospital for more information on how to improve health by visiting our Institute for Public Health website: www.InstitutePH.com

Sources: [March of Dimes 2023](#) [Centers for Disease Control 2022](#) [National Institute of Child Health and Human Development 2012](#) [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition](#)

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