



Healthy Living With Head Start

Making Time for Mom



Taking care of your own health and well-being can be easily overlooked in the rush of taking care of your family's needs. As a parent, just finding time to eat or sleep can be a challenge, so taking care of yourself can fall by the wayside. It is essential to take care of your personal health to make sure that you are able to take care of the health of your family. Make time to take care of these important parts of your health:

- * **Take time for a meal:** It may sound simple, but taking time to sit down to a complete and balanced meal is an important part of maintaining your health.
- * **Get some sleep:** This is a tough one. Do your best to carve out some quality sleep time to keep all of your body's functions working at full capacity.
- * **Relax:** Finding a way to reduce your stress during the day will help keep your day (and your body) running smoothly.
- * **Stay active:** Physical activity can help keep you energized, healthy, and can also reduce stress.
- * **See your doctor:** Seeing your doctor annually will help keep up with any health concerns before they become health problems.
- * **Go to the dentist:** Seeing a dentist regularly will help keep your teeth healthy and will help prevent dental decay and disease.

Taking Care Before Baby

Healthy Teeth for a Healthy Pregnancy

Many moms-to-be don't realize how important dental care is during pregnancy. Pregnancy puts you at a higher risk for gum disease which has been linked to low birth weight and premature births. Regular visits to your dentist can help you avoid many problems associated with dental disease during pregnancy. Here are the ins and outs of prenatal oral health care:



1. Let your dentist know you are an expecting mom, they will have lots of information for you to keep your mouth healthy during pregnancy.
2. Be mindful of your dental care at home. Make sure you are brushing regularly and eating foods high in fiber and low in sugars to keep your teeth and gums healthy.
3. Make sure to treat any dental decay as soon as possible to avoid transmitting the decay-causing bacteria to your new baby.

Healthy Choices for a Healthy Pregnancy

It is no surprise that eating well during pregnancy will help keep you and your baby healthy, but what are healthy choices during pregnancy? Here are some quick pointers to make sure you are staying on track for a happy and healthy pregnancy (and baby):



- * Gaining too much weight can be just as dangerous as not gaining enough. In the first trimester you should gain between 1 and 4 pounds. For the remainder of your pregnancy, you should gain between 2 and 4 pounds per month. Work with your doctor to ensure you are gaining the appropriate amount of weight.
- * You should only eat slightly more calories (about 300 a day) than normal. This is equal to adding a half of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich a day. Focus on eating foods high in fiber like fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Remember to stay hydrated.
- * Cravings can be your body's way of telling you what it needs to keep you and your baby healthy. Listen to your body when it asks for specific foods, but be mindful of your food choices. A craving for ice cream can mean that your body needs some nutrient rich dairy products, so try a low fat yogurt or a glass of 1% milk before committing to that ice cream in the freezer.

'Breast' for Success

Decisions about feeding your baby are one of the first decisions you will make as a new parent. Take time to learn some of the benefits and keys to successful breastfeeding to make sure your choice is the best for you and your baby.

Health Benefits

Decrease your baby's risk of:

- * Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- * Childhood illness and infection
- * Childhood obesity
- * Cancer
- * Diabetes

Mom's health benefits:

- * Stronger attachment and bonding with baby
- * Quicker recovery from labor and birth
- * Increased weight loss after pregnancy
- * Reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers, diabetes, and

Practical Benefits

- * It's free. Your body will naturally make everything your growing baby needs at no cost.
- * No prep needed. There are no bottles to prepare, no formula to mix, and no worrying about sanitizing supplies.
- * Less complication at night. Putting your baby to breast for night feedings is much easier than getting up and making a bottle.
- * Less gas. Avoiding bottles can help reduce gassiness and discomfort. Less gas will make a much happier (and quieter) baby.

Helpful Hints

- * Find a strong support system. Surrounding yourself with people that build up your confidence will help keep positive momentum even when the going gets tough. WIC Peer Counselors provide one-on-one support to breastfeeding moms, call 607.433.8071 for more information.
- * Allow at least an hour of skin-to-skin time with the baby after birth. This will not only help you bond with the baby, but will also encourage milk production and a healthy latch.
- * Breastfeeding is not always an easy path, the first 2-3 weeks will be hard. Once you allow yourself and your baby a little time to learn what works best, things will start to get easier.
- * Be confident in yourself. You will get a lot of advice and opinions, never lose sight of your ability to know what is best for your baby.

Don't get discouraged. Making the decision to try breastfeeding is a win. Breastfeed as much as you can for as long as you can and you will be a success.

Making Mealtime Memories

Homemade Baby Food

Making your own baby food can be a great way to control what is in your infant's diet and save money at the same time. It is important to remember a few things when making food for your infant:

1. Your infant can eat many of the same foods as you - puree foods you would normally eat with no added seasoning or sugars. Stay away from peanut butter, cows milk, and honey before age one.
2. Keep it simple - only use one ingredient for each baby food flavor. If you find your infant likes mixed foods you can always mix two kinds at meal time.
3. Always store foods properly - freeze or can extra foods for long term storage and refrigerate any open foods. Use or dispose of any open jars of food within 48 hours (24 hours for meats).
4. Make sure the texture is appropriate - a younger infant with fewer teeth will need a smooth puree while a toddler may be able to chew some soft textures.
5. Always monitor your infant during meals - whether you make the food or buy it, always spoon feed your infant and watch for signs of choking.

Foods to Try:

- * Squash
- * Peas
- * Green beans
- * Carrots
- * Black, kidney, or garbanzo beans
- * Bananas
- * Chicken
- * Oatmeal
- * Avocado
- * Turkey



Directions:

- * Wash your hands before starting any food preparation.
- * Clean foods and remove all skins and bones.
- * Cut food into small pieces and boil in just enough water to cover food (soft foods like banana and avocado can be pureed without cooking).
- * Cook foods until soft.
- * Puree food in a blender or food processor.
- * Freeze or can food for long term storage making sure to properly seal, date, and label each food.

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