

10 Healthy Pregnancy Tips

1 Learn

as much as possible about the wonderful ways that your body is changing and about how your baby is growing. Talk to your mother, your friends, and other women about pregnancy, labor, and birth. Attend an early pregnancy Lamaze class, read books, and watch videos about normal pregnancy and childbirth.

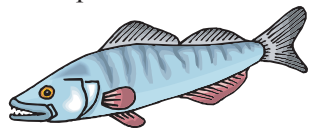
2 Think



about whether you want to give birth at a hospital, at a birthing center, or at home. Choose a health care provider who will be able to assist you in your chosen location and who helps build your confidence for pregnancy and childbirth.

3 Eat

a well balanced diet, paying attention to the recommendations by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (www.choosemyplate.com). Make your plate colorful – eating lots of vegetables and fruits every day. Eat fish 3 times a week for your baby’s brain growth and development. Drink lots of water—six to ten glasses a day—and choose (real) fruit juices and skim milk instead of sodas.



4 Stay active

Continue exercise programs that you were doing before you became pregnant according to the recommendations of your health care provider. If you were not exercising before becoming pregnant, consider walking, swimming, prenatal exercise, or prenatal dance classes. Regular, moderate exercise makes labor shorter and less painful and decreases the risk for cesarean surgery.

5 Avoid

substances that may be dangerous for you and your baby, such as cigarettes, alcohol, and street drugs. Do not take any medications, even over-the-counter medications, unless you have discussed them with your health care provider.



6 Rest

Listen to your body to determine if you need short breaks during the day and to determine how many hours of sleep you need at night.



7 Talk

to your baby and enjoy your growing bond with him. Research now shows that babies react to the sense of touch as early as ten weeks of pregnancy. A little later, she can react to light, your voice, music, and other sounds.

8 Plan

your baby’s birth. For most women, birth is normal, natural, and healthy. Learn as much as possible about what birth is like in the location you have chosen. Ask questions about the six healthy birth practices that are known to promote natural, safe and healthy birth. Lamaze classes will help you understand what happens during childbirth. You and your partner will learn positions and movements which will aid labor progress and ways to cope with the stress and pain.

9 Manage

the stress in your life. Keep communication open with your partner. Build your support system. Learn and practice meditation. Take a prenatal yoga class. Learn stress management techniques such as slow, deep breathing and other relaxation strategies in Lamaze childbirth education classes.



10 Enjoy

this special time in your life! Your partner, your family, and friends can help make the most of this wonderful transition. Have confidence in your body’s ability to grow, nourish, and give birth to this baby as women have done for centuries.