



# BECOMING A DAD



March of Dimes is committed to making sure that fathers are prepared to support their partners before, during and after pregnancy.



- 1. BEFORE PREGNANCY**
- 2. DURING PREGNANCY**
- 3. LABOR AND BIRTH**
- 4. BABY'S HOME**



Being a dad begins even before your baby is born. The things you do to keep you and your partner healthy before and during pregnancy can help your baby be born healthy and strong.



# 1. BEFORE PREGNANCY

- 1.1: MAKE A REPRODUCTIVE LIFE PLAN**
- 1.2: GET A PRECONCEPTION CHECKUP**
- 1.3: GET A DENTAL CHECKUP**
- 1.4: STOP SMOKING, DRINKING ALCOHOL OR ABUSING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**
- 1.5: EAT HEALTHY FOODS**
- 1.6: MANAGE YOUR STRESS**

You won't be the one with the baby in your belly. But there's a lot you can do to get ready for your partner's pregnancy. The healthier you are, the healthier your partner and baby can be.





## 1.1: MAKE A REPRODUCTIVE LIFE PLAN

This plan helps you think about if and when you want to have a baby. If you're thinking about having a baby, ask yourself these questions:



- How old do you want to be when you start having children?
- How many children do you want to have?
- If you're not ready to start a family now, what kind of birth control will you and your partner use to prevent pregnancy.
- What can you do to get healthy before you start your family?



## 1.2: GET A PRECONCEPTION CHECKUP

This is a medical checkup you get before your partner gets pregnant. You want to make sure you're as healthy as you can be before she had a baby. You also want to make sure there's nothing affecting your fertility.

Things you will want to know:

- Your reproductive history
- Your family health history
- Your general health
- Health conditions, like diabetes, high blood pressure and depression
- Medicines you take
- Strong chemicals that you use at work or home





To view the video, click on the image or visit: <https://youtu.be/mxwdJkPtilw>





## 1.3: GET DENTAL CHECKUP

Make sure your teeth and gums are healthy. Some studies show a link between gum disease and having a premature or low-birthweight baby.

When you see your dentist, tell them you and your partner are planning on getting pregnant.





## 1.4: STOP SMOKING, DRINKING ALCOHOL, USING STREET DRUGS OR ABUSING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

All of these can affect your fertility. They can also be harmful to you and your family.

- Make a list of the reason you want to quit
- Set a quit date
- Tell your friends and family that you're going to quit
- Get rid of all your cigarettes, alcohol and drugs
- Don't go to parties, bars or other places where you may smoke, drink alcohol or abuse drugs.







## 1.5: EAT HEALTHY

Make healthy food choices, including

- Grains – like whole-grain pasta, rice and bread
- Vegetables – like green beans, broccoli and spinach
- Fruits – like strawberries, apples and bananas
- Milk products – like low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt
- Proteins – like lean meat and chicken





## 1.6: MANAGE YOUR STRESS

Stress can affect your sperm so it's harder for you to get your partner pregnant.

Having a baby can bring more stress to your life. So it's best to get your stress under control before your partner gets pregnant.

Here are some things you can do to help reduce your stress:

- Do something active every day
- Get a good night's sleep. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- Eat healthy foods
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, use street drugs or abuse prescription medicine.





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