

# Health Before Pregnancy- A Life Plan

"A reproductive life plan is a set of personal goals about having (or not having) children. It also states how to achieve those goals. Everyone needs to make a reproductive plan based on personal values and resources."

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/preconception/QandA.htm>

## Topics to think about:

- q Do I want to have children? Even if you don't this plan is still for you.
- q I eat a healthy diet based on Canada's Food Guide.
- q I take a folic acid supplement every day.
- q I lead a healthy lifestyle and am in good health.
- q I will have a pre pregnancy visit with my doctor or health care provider.
- q My immunizations are up to date. I am immune to German Measles and Chicken Pox.
- q I have discussed my emotions and any history of depression with my doctor.
- q I am aware of any family history of medical problems.
- q My partner and I are prepared to raise a child.
- q I/we can afford the added costs of diapers, clothing etc.

In this package you will find information to help you create your own unique life plan. This plan should be reviewed and can be changed as your life situation changes. It is important to discuss your Reproductive Life Plan with your partner.

For more information  
on health before pregnancy  
please contact the  
Northwestern Health Unit  
at 1-800-465-4377.



# Health Before Pregnancy- A Life Plan

We all have dreams of what we would like our lives to look like. Think about your goals and dreams and if they include having a family. Consider the following questions.

## Do I see myself having a child one day? Y N

If not, there are still things to consider. Many pregnancies are unplanned. If I got pregnant accidentally what would I do? \_\_\_\_\_

I am sexually active or thinking about being sexually active, how will I prevent pregnancy? \_\_\_\_\_

I do see children in my future. When? \_\_\_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Until then, I will use the following method of birth control: \_\_\_\_\_

(If you need birth control options call the Northwestern Health Unit for an appointment with a Sexual Health Nurse.)

Before I have children I would like to: \_\_\_\_\_

## What is my current state of health and lifestyle?

It is important to lead a healthy lifestyle now; in the event you become pregnant your baby can have a healthy start to life.

I am making a Reproductive Life Plan.

I am a healthy weight.

I take a folic acid supplement every day. Folic acid helps to prevent certain birth defects when taken before and in early pregnancy.

I participate in regular physical activity

I do not drink alcohol in excess, use tobacco products or recreational drugs (marijuana, oxycontin, painkillers)

I do not have multiple sex partners or have any sexually transmitted diseases.

I have regular check-ups at the doctor and dentist. (Some medical conditions that can affect pregnancy negatively are: asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, thyroid conditions, dental problems, mental illness (including depression) heart defects and infections.)

# Health Before Pregnancy- A Life Plan

## Family History

Think of the health problems in your immediate family (parents, siblings, grandparents). Discuss with your doctor ways you can reduce your risk of having these problems. These are conditions to ask your family about:

- A baby born early or prematurely
- A baby who weighed less than 5 1/2 lb. at birth
- Pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure in pregnancy) or eclampsia (seizures)
- Gestational diabetes (diabetes that starts during pregnancy)
- Two or more miscarriages, stillbirth, infertility problems, baby with a heart defect, asthma, stroke etc.

## Dreams and Goals

A Life Plan helps you think ahead so you can fulfill your goals and dreams. A few thoughts to consider:

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_

How much education do you want to complete? \_\_\_\_\_

What type of work or career do you want? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your dream for being a parent? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your financial plan before starting a family? \_\_\_\_\_

Other goals? \_\_\_\_\_

Your doctor or health care provider is a good resource for questions you may have regarding health before pregnancy. Health care professionals such as the Reproductive and Sexual Health Nurses at the Northwestern Health Unit can help you understand lifestyle options and clinical services that are best suited for you.

For more information on preconception health please contact the Northwestern Health Unit at 1-800-465-4377 or [www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca).