

## Prenatal Care: All Pregnant Women Need It

### Background:

- Babies born to mothers who received no prenatal care are 3 times more likely to be born at low birth weight and 5 times more likely to die than those whose mothers received prenatal care. (UNLV, 2007)
- Babies of mothers who do not get prenatal care are three times more likely to have a low birth weight and five times more likely to die than those born to mothers who do get care. (WH,2007)
- Differences in the infant mortality rates among industrialized nations reflect disparities in the health status of women before and during pregnancy, as well as the quality and accessibility of primary care for pregnant women and their infants. (UNLV, 2007)
- The Healthy People 2010 goals for both entry into prenatal care in the first trimester and early and continuous prenatal care are 90%.(UNLV, 2007)
- Infant mortality rates were higher for infants whose mothers had no prenatal care, were teenagers, had less education, and were unmarried or smoked during pregnancy. (UNLV, 2007)
- Prenatal care is the health care received before a baby is born. (UNLV, 2007)
- Prenatal care includes three major components: risk assessment, treatment for health concerns and reducing risks, and education. (UNLV, 2007)
- Early and adequate prenatal care has been associated with improved pregnancy outcomes. (UNLV, 2007)
- Many women in the U.S. receive little or no health care while they are pregnant. (UNLV, 2007)
- Women who start prenatal care in the third trimester and women who receive no prenatal care are at increased risk for poor pregnancy out come. (UNLV, 2007)
- There has been social support for prenatal care since the early 1900s, yet so many women in the U.S. still receive little or no health care while pregnant. (STATE, 2007)
- In a study published in the January issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, researchers from the University College of Medical Sciences in Delhi, India, and colleagues followed a group of 200 women who were 24 to 32 weeks pregnant and lived within 5 kilometers of a hospital in East Delhi, India. (NLM, 2007)
  - The women either were underweight (with a body mass index less than 18.5) or had a low hemoglobin level (between 7 grams and 9 grams per deciliter), which can indicate malnourishment. (NLM, 2007)
  - The women taking the prenatal vitamins gained an average of 9.2 kilograms (20.3 pounds), compared with 8.7 kilograms (19.2 pounds) for the women taking the placebo. (NLM, 2007)

- The babies born to the women taking the prenatal vitamin also weighed an average of 98 grams (about 3.5 ounces) more than those born to the women taking the placebo. The rate of low birth weight in the vitamin group was 15.2 percent, compared with 43.1 percent in the placebo group. (NLM, 2007)
- Women who start prenatal care early in their pregnancies tend to have fewer problems and deliver healthier babies than do women who delay or receive no health care while they are pregnant. (STATE, 2007)
- Since 1990, the proportion of infants whose mothers entered prenatal care in the first trimester increased from 76 percent to 83 percent nationwide. (STATE, 2007)
- Prenatal vitamins may reduce the risk of low birth-weight babies for certain women. (STATE, 2007)
- Every year nearly one million American women deliver babies without receiving adequate medical attention. (HRSA, 2007)
- Low birth weight, or infants weighing less than 2,500 grams (about 5.5 pounds) at birth, is a major predictor of death during infancy and is also associated with an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and high blood pressure later in life. (NLM FULL, 2007)

**Epidemiologic Picture:**

- During the first trimester, 88.6% percent of white women had care, 76.3% of African Americans received care.
- Low birth weight is especially a problem for women in countries low on resources and for low-income women, both of whom are often malnourished.
- In Connecticut in 2002, 88.3% of live births were to women receiving early prenatal care, 9.7% were to women beginning care in the second trimester, and 2.0% were to women receiving late of no prenatal care.
- In 2002, about 1 in 49 infants were born to a wo(,)Tj11.97729 0 0 12 248eu 315(rn to a wo)Tj11.t1.9

1. See a doctor or other health care provider from the start of a pregnancy.
  2. Do not drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes or take drugs.
  3. Eat healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk, eggs, cheese, and grains.
  4. Take good care of one's health and exercise sensibly.
  5. Have the baby checked by a doctor or health care provider right after birth and throughout childhood. (HRSA, 2007)
- Prenatal care is important because habits that may not harm an adult may still harm the baby's development. Remember that the child's health begins long before it is born. Through proper prenatal care, one can reduce your baby's risk for health problems. (HRSA, 2007)
  - One must see a doctor and get prenatal care as soon as one thinks they are pregnant. It is important to see a doctor regularly throughout pregnancy, so be sure to keep all the prenatal care appointments.(NOFAS, 2007)
  - Healthy People 2010 - for objectives that address health services and protection (for example, access to prenatal care, health insurance coverage, etc.) the targets have been set so that there is an improvement for all racial/ethnic segments of the population (that is, the targets are set "better than the best" racial/ethnic subgroup shown for the objective). (HP, 2007)

### **Solutions to the Problem:**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/childbirthandbeyond/helppaying.cfm>)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is a Federal Government source for Women's health information. Many pregnant women do not get prenatal care because they cannot afford it, which is very sad. While pregnant, everyone needs to take care of themselves, and their babies. That is why there are organizations listed on that site that are able to help future mothers with financial needs. Some of the organizations are the WIC program along with the Children's Health Insurance Program. Each organization has information about it and there are links to learn more. There are also phone numbers that one will be able to call for help and questions. This is a very helpful Web site; it

teaches women that they should not hold back from receiving the necessary prenatal care just because they may not be able to afford it. On this site, there is also other information on being pregnant in general and how to get through the three trimesters.

Medline Plus: Important Questions, Answered  
(<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/prenatalcare.html>)

Medline Plus is a Web site that is part of a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. The Web site has the latest news on prenatal care and overviews. There are also specific conditions of prenatal care for each of the three trimesters. The links on this site are to different information on different testing that women will receive when they obtain prenatal care, such as, folic acid, high risk pregnancy, and the fetal development. This Web site answers many questions that one might have during their pregnancy or even before they decide to become pregnant. There are statistics on the site along with other organizations one can go to, to learn more.

Personal Solutions Inc. Prenatal Care  
(<http://www.personalsolutionsinc.org/prenatal.html>)

Prenatal Care is extremely important to ensure a healthy pregnancy, as well as a health newborn baby. Proper nutrition, exercise, and regular visits to your physician are essential components of a successful pregnancy. It is also necessary that an expectant mother avoid using alcohol, tobacco products, or illicit drugs throughout the course of her pregnancy. Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs can have seriously damaging effects on a pregnant woman and her child. This site is dedicated to showing one the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol along with tobacco and illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana and speed. Not only does the site tell one how horrible it is to do while pregnant, but it also has links for treatment of their problem(s). There is additional information on prevention, intervention, case management, and an outreach program. This is a very important site because many women still abuse drugs while pregnant.

### **Internet Resources:**

March of Dimes; saving babies, together  
(<http://www.marchofdimes.com/>)

March of Dimes is an excellent website for all. There is so much information on pregnancy and babies, along with the well being of the mother and baby. March of Dimes is dedicated to fighting to save babies from premature birth. While browsing the site, one will come across information on birth defects, global reports, newborn screenings, and complications, along with a variety of other links. March of Dimes really shows how they want all pregnant women to receive prenatal care, no matter their status or race. Whether the carrier is healthy or not, they should check out this site that is chock filled with good, professional information.

Kids Health for Parents

([http://kidshealth.org/parent/pregnancy\\_newborn/pregnancy/medical\\_care\\_pregnancy.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/pregnancy_newborn/pregnancy/medical_care_pregnancy.html))

Kids Health for Parents is founded by the Nemours Foundation. While on the site, one will come across very helpful information on what to expect from their prenatal visits, starting with their first visit and going to their very last visit before birth. It tells one about how they can start taking care of their bodies before becoming pregnant along with where one can go to receive prenatal care. The Kids Health for Parents also gives everyone information on infections, emotions and behavior, growth and development, and medical problems. So many questions one might have can be answered on this single site.

Mayo Clinic- Tools for healthier lives

(<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/prenatal-care/PR00008>)

The Mayo Clinic takes a person through the whole process of their visits during each of the three trimesters. It tells them what they will expect and the kind of tests that will be done. The tests are explained in great detail, and it tells them if those are optional or not, because not all tests have to be taken. Some of the information that the doctor will go over are medical history, the due date, physical exams, pelvis exams, blood tests, and urine tests. People can even ask their own questions on the site, and have answered by professionals. People are also able to register and sign up to receive important information along with new facts and studies. There is a treatment decisions section where one can find out about how to treat a variety of diseases and symptoms.

### **Bibliography:**

Healthy People 2010,

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/hpscripts/SearchAll.asp>

<http://www.nofas.org/family/pregnant.aspx>

Kids Health for Parents,

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/pregnancy\\_newborn/pregnancy/medical\\_care\\_pregnancy.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/pregnancy_newborn/pregnancy/medical_care_pregnancy.html)

March of Dimes,

<http://www.marchofdimes.com/peristats/tlanding.aspx?reg=09&top=5&lev=0&slev=4>

Mayo Clinic- Tools for healthier lives, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/prenatal-care/PR00008>

Medline Plus, [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_43499.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_43499.html)

Medline Plus: Important Questions, Answered,

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/prenatalcare.html>

National Organization of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome,

Personal Solutions Inc. Prenatal Care, <http://www.personalsolutionsinc.org/prenatal.html>

Prenatal Care Study, <http://www.unlv.edu/centers/cdclv/healthnv/prenatalcare.html>

Prenatal Care, <http://www.state.sd.us/doh/Famhlth/MCHprenatal.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,  
<http://www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/childbirthandbeyond/helppaying.cfm>  
Women's health, <http://womenshealth.gov/faq/prenatal.htm>

<b>Back to Betty C. Jung's Web site</b>	<a href="http://www.bettyjung.net/">http://www.bettyjung.net/</a>
<b>Back to Fact Sheet Directory</b>	<a href="http://www.bettyjung.net/Pch202fs.htm">http://www.bettyjung.net/Pch202fs.htm</a>

(Class Handout)

# Prenatal Care: Healthy Mom & Baby

There has been social support for prenatal care since the early 1900s, yet so many women in the U.S. still receive little or no health care while pregnant.  
(STATE, 2007)

- Babies born to mothers who received no prenatal care are 3 times more likely to be born at low birth weight and 5 times more likely to die than those whose mothers received prenatal care. (UNLV, 2007)
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- In 2002, about 1 in 49 infants were born to a woman receiving late of no prenatal care in Connecticut.
- In Connecticut 84.2% of live births to women receiving adequate/adequate plus prenatal care, 9.1% were to women receiving intermediate care, and 6.7% were to women receiving inadequate care.
- In 2002, about 1 in 15 infants (6.7% of live births) was born to a woman receiving inadequate prenatal care in Connecticut.

According to:

WWW.MARCHOFDIMES.COM

Sites filled with Prenatal Care Information:

<http://womenshealth.gov/faq/prenatal.htm>

<http://www.state.sd.us/doh/Famhlth/MCHprenatal.pdf>

<http://www.marchofdimes.com/peristats/tlanding.aspx?reg=09&top=5&lev=0&slev=4>

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_43499.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_43499.html)

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/pregnancy\\_newborn/pregnancy/medical\\_care\\_pregnancy.htm](http://kidshealth.org/parent/pregnancy_newborn/pregnancy/medical_care_pregnancy.htm)

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