

# What to Expect Before You're Expecting: A Comprehensive Guide to Preconception Health and Wellness

Planning for a baby can be an exciting and nerve-wracking time. There's so much to think about, from finances to your health. This comprehensive guide will help you understand what to expect before you're expecting, from preconception health and wellness to fertility and pregnancy.



## What to Expect Before You're Expecting: The Complete Guide to Getting Pregnant by Heidi Murkoff

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## Preconception Health and Wellness

The best way to prepare for a healthy pregnancy is to start with preconception health and wellness. This means taking care of your physical and emotional health before you even start trying to conceive.

## Physical Health

Some of the most important things you can do for your physical health before pregnancy include:

- **Get regular exercise.** Exercise is essential for maintaining a healthy weight, reducing stress, and improving overall fitness. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week.
- **Eat a healthy diet.** A healthy diet is important for maintaining a healthy weight and providing your body with the nutrients it needs for pregnancy. Focus on eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- **Take a prenatal vitamin.** A prenatal vitamin can help you get the essential nutrients you need for pregnancy, such as folic acid and iron.
- **Get enough sleep.** Sleep is essential for overall health and well-being. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep per night.
- **Reduce stress.** Stress can have a negative impact on your physical and emotional health. Find healthy ways to manage stress, such as exercise, yoga, or meditation.

## **Emotional Health**

It's also important to take care of your emotional health before pregnancy. This means being aware of your feelings and needs, and finding healthy ways to cope with stress.

- **Talk to your partner.** It's important to talk to your partner about your feelings and needs before you start trying to conceive. This will help you get on the same page about your goals and expectations.

- **Join a support group.** There are many support groups available for women who are trying to conceive. These groups can provide you with information, support, and encouragement.
- **See a therapist.** If you're struggling with stress or anxiety, it may be helpful to see a therapist. A therapist can help you learn healthy coping mechanisms and manage your emotions.

## **Fertility**

Once you've taken care of your preconception health and wellness, you can start thinking about fertility. Fertility is the ability to conceive and carry a child to term. Some factors that can affect fertility include:

- **Age.** Fertility declines with age, especially after age 35.
- **Weight.** Being overweight or underweight can affect fertility.
- **Lifestyle factors.** Smoking, drinking alcohol, and using drugs can all affect fertility.
- **Medical conditions.** Some medical conditions, such as endometriosis and PCOS, can affect fertility.

If you're having trouble conceiving, you should see a doctor. They can help you determine the cause of your infertility and recommend appropriate treatment.

## **Pregnancy**

If you're pregnant, congratulations! This is an exciting time, but it can also be overwhelming. Here are a few things you can expect during pregnancy:

- **Morning sickness.** Morning sickness is a common symptom of pregnancy. It usually starts around 6 weeks of pregnancy and lasts until around 12 weeks.
- **Fatigue.** Fatigue is another common symptom of pregnancy. It can be caused by hormonal changes and the increased demands of pregnancy on your body.
- **Weight gain.** Most women gain between 25 and 35 pounds during pregnancy. This weight gain is necessary to support the growth of your baby.
- **Swelling.** Swelling is also a common symptom of pregnancy. It can be caused by hormonal changes and the increased fluid volume in your body.
- **Back pain.** Back pain is a common symptom of pregnancy. It can be caused by the changes in your posture and the increased weight of your belly.

Pregnancy is a journey, and there will be ups and downs along the way. But it's also a beautiful and rewarding experience. Embrace the changes that are happening to your body and your life, and enjoy this special time.

Preparing for a baby can be a lot of work, but it's also an incredibly rewarding experience. By taking care of your physical and emotional health before you're expecting, you can increase your chances of having a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.

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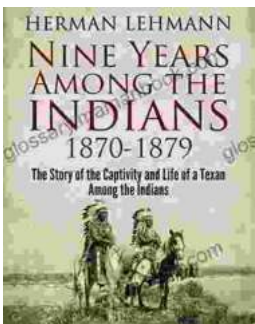


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