

## Resources

- *Healthy Beginnings. Your Handbook for Pregnancy and Birth.* 2009. Available for purchase at [www.sogc.org/healthybeginnings/index.html](http://www.sogc.org/healthybeginnings/index.html).
- *Active Living During Pregnancy: Physical Activity Guidelines for Mother and Baby.* Available for purchase at [www.csep.ca/publications](http://www.csep.ca/publications).
- *Physical Activity Readiness Medical Examination for Pregnancy* (PDF). Available online at [www.csep.ca/publications](http://www.csep.ca/publications).
- **Health Canada** ([www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca))
  - Canada's Food Guide: Pregnancy and Breastfeeding
  - Prenatal Nutrition information
- **Motherisk Program** ([www.motherisk.org](http://www.motherisk.org))
  - Helpline: 1-877-439-2744 or 416-813-6780
  - *The Complete Guide to Everyday Risks in Pregnancy & Breastfeeding* by Dr. Gideon Koren. Available for purchase online.
- **Public Health Agency of Canada** ([www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca)) under the Health Promotion section:
  - The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program
  - Healthy Pregnancy Website
- **Local Prenatal Nutrition Programs**
  - Orillia Native Women's Group Prenatal Nutrition Program  
Tel: 705-329-7755
  - Simcoe County MotherCare Network  
Tel: 705-733-3227 (Barrie)  
Tel: 705-326-9905 (Orillia)  
[www.catulpa.on.ca](http://www.catulpa.on.ca)
  - Great Beginnings Prenatal Nutrition Program  
Tel: 705-645-3155 (Bracebridge & Gravenhurst)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Diabetes Dietitian Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

Diabetes Nurse Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

# Planning for a Healthy Pregnancy with Diabetes

## INFORMATION BOOKLET

Planning a pregnancy is important whether or not you have diabetes. To help give your baby a healthy start to life, it is just as important to take care of yourself before conception as it is during your pregnancy.

Women with diabetes can have a healthy pregnancy - with pregnancy planning!

This pamphlet will guide you in your diabetes management needs before pregnancy to help make sure that you have a safe pregnancy and deliver a healthy baby.

### Diabetes Education Centre

Orillia Adult Program: 705-325-7611

Gravenhurst Adult Program: 705-687-9515

Paediatric Program: 705-327-9152

## Why is it important for me to plan my pregnancy?

Planning for a pregnancy is always important. However, if you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes, planning your pregnancy is even more important, because your diabetes – if not well managed – can increase the risk of complications for you and your baby.

As well, if your diabetes is not properly controlled before and during your pregnancy, diabetes-related complications such as eye, kidney, heart and nerve problems, as well as blood pressure and thyroid function may get worse.

Speak with your healthcare team before you become pregnant to discuss any existing complications and to have the recommended diabetes related tests. Preparing for your pregnancy will help reduce the risks for you and your baby.

## What you can do to prepare for pregnancy

### Plan ahead!

Until you are ready and prepared for pregnancy use a reliable method of birth control. Speak to your doctor about the birth control options available to you.

### Aim to achieve near normal blood glucose levels.

A glycated hemoglobin (A1C) level of 7% or less is recommended before you become pregnant, as well as during your pregnancy. You may need to individualize your goal if you have hypoglycemia unawareness or severe hypoglycemia.

### Enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

- Eat healthy. Follow the *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* to make sure that you are getting the proper nutrition.
- Be active. Include an exercise program that will improve your body strength, help manage your blood glucose levels, achieve and maintain a healthy weight and reduce stress.
- Be smoke, alcohol and drug free. If you need help to quit smoking speak with your doctor or contact the Smoker's Helpline at [www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca).

### Take a prenatal supplement.

A daily prenatal supplement, including 0.4 to 1 milligram (mg) of folic acid, 16 to 20 mg of iron, and vitamin B12 is recommended at least three months before you become pregnant.

Taking a daily dose of folic acid can reduce the risk of spinal defects in your baby. Your doctor may advise you to take up to 5 mg of folic acid. If so, you need to reduce the amount to between 0.4 to 1 mg once you are 12 weeks pregnant. Continue the prenatal supplement throughout your pregnancy and for six weeks after you deliver or while you are breastfeeding.

### Discuss pregnancy planning with your doctor.

You should have a medical and dental check-up, as well as an eye exam to assess and treat existing diabetes complications and to review your medication. Please note that certain medications, *i.e. metformin, actos and avandia*, may affect fertility, therefore birth control options need to be reviewed.

**Involve your diabetes healthcare team in your pregnancy planning**, include an endocrinologist and/or internist, and diabetes nurse and dietitian educators. They will:

- Review your medication/insulin and determine if they are safe to continue before and during pregnancy.
- Help you change from medication to insulin before you become pregnant.
- Review your insulin. After review another insulin regimen may be suggested, such as basal-bolus insulin or insulin pump therapy.
- Review your diabetes management, to include: blood glucose monitoring, sick day and hypoglycemia (low blood glucose) management, nutrition and carbohydrate counting skills.

### What if it is a surprise pregnancy?

If you have an unplanned pregnancy, contact your healthcare team right away. They will assist you with any help you require.