Healthy Babies, Healthy Futures: Preventing Prematurity
Purpose

- To empower African American women to have the healthiest pregnancy possible
- To decrease the number of African American babies that die everyday
What you will learn today

- The Prematurity issue
- How Prematurity affects the African American population
- Risk Factors associated with Prematurity
- Steps to take to reduce the number of babies born too soon
Prematurity

It’s a bigger problem than you think...

march of dimes®
Facts about prematurity

PRETERM
(less than 37 weeks)

VERY PRETERM
(less than 32 weeks)

African Americans have the highest rate of preterm births in CA (15.3%)

African Americans have the highest rate of very preterm birth in CA (3.1%)

Respiratory Distress Syndrome
Problems Feeding
Vision & Hearing Problems
Consequences to Mom

- Increases her risk for a second preterm delivery
- Increases stress for the family and mom
Risk Factors

† **Obstetrical**
– Previous preterm birth
– Multiples (twins, triplets)
– Abnormal uterus/cervix

† **Medical**
– Diabetes, high blood pressure, infections
– Extremes of weight, age, severe stress

† **Behavioral**
– Smoking, alcohol/drugs, domestic violence
Steps to Take

Healthy Lifestyle
- STOP Alcohol use
- STOP Tobacco use
- STOP Drug use
- Limit your caffeine intake or avoid it
- Manage your weight
- Incorporate physical activity
- Practice stress reduction
Safe Planning for a Baby

- Begin taking Folic Acid
- Control your Blood Pressure
- Control your Diabetes, (blood sugar)
- Know your risk for Sickle Cell Anemia
- Know your history of preterm birth
- Get tested for other health problems (STD, anemia, asthma, Urinary Tract Infection)
- Control your Weight extremes
- Know your family history of birth defects
Early Prenatal Care

† GET Health Insurance
† FIND a health provider
† TELL the health care team EVERYTHING!
Empower Yourself

✦ TELL your history

✦ ASK Questions

✦ CHOOSE
  – to be good to yourself
  – to see the best health care provider
  – to have the best father for your baby
  – to have a strong support system
Be selective.
Your baby deserves the best!
Recognize the Signs & Symptoms of Preterm Labor

- Contractions every 10 minutes or more often
- Urge to urinate
- Cramps with or without diarrhea
- Cramps that feel like your period
- The feeling that your baby is pushing down
- Clear, pink or brownish fluid (water) leaking from your vagina
- Low, dull backache
ACT Quickly

- Call your health provider immediately, if you have any of the warning signs
- Stop what you are doing. Rest on your left side for one hour
- Drink 2-3 glasses of water or juice (not coffee or soda)
- If the symptoms get worse or do not go away after one hour, call your provider again or go to the hospital.
Where to get more information

† [www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com)
March of Dimes Website

† [www.marchofdimesbaby.org](http://www.marchofdimesbaby.org)
Answers the questions women have about preconception, pregnancy and newborn health

† [www.marchofdimes.com/share](http://www.marchofdimes.com/share)
Parents of Preemies Online Support Network

† [www.lapublichealth.org/mch](http://www.lapublichealth.org/mch)
Black Infant Health Programs

† [www.LABestBabies.org](http://www.LABestBabies.org)
LA Best Babies Network