

Becoming a Parent

Deciding to have a baby is a big step. There are many things to think about, like:

Am I healthy?

Do I earn enough money to support a baby?

Am I ready for the stress of raising a baby?

What are my career plans?

Do I have support from family and friends?

Am I the right age to have a baby?



The decision to become pregnant and the responsibility for raising your child rest with you!

Your Decision

When you decide to have a baby, remember that babies need a lot of care and love. A baby will take up most of your time.

Talk with other people about what it is like to be a parent. Family members, friends or clergy can help you. Talking about your hopes, fears and dreams for the future may make it easier to decide.

What's Best For You?

Not to have a baby now?

If you want to wait to be a parent:

- Stay healthy or improve your health--eat right, don't smoke, don't drink, don't use drugs.
- See your doctor, nurse or certified nurse midwife every year.

If you have sex, be sure to pick a kind of birth control that is best for you.

To have a baby?

If you want to be a parent:

- Stay healthy or improve your health--eat right, take 400 mcg of folic acid a day, and don't smoke, drink, or use drugs.
- Learn about pregnancy and caring for babies and children.
- Figure out how a child will change your life, including relationships.
- Meet with your doctor, nurse or certified nurse midwife. (Some sample questions to talk about with your health care provider are included on the other side of this pamphlet.)
- Look for changes in your body that may mean you are pregnant. (Some changes are large, tender breasts, feeling sick to your stomach, feeling tired and urinating more often.)

Questions to Ask Your Doctor, Nurse or Certified Nurse Midwife Before You Get Pregnant!

- Do I have any health problems that might be trouble if I get pregnant?
- Are there diseases or conditions that might run in my family?
- Is my age a problem?
- When do I stop using birth control? What are some early signs that I am pregnant?
- How will smoking, alcohol use and drug use/abuse affect my getting pregnant? How will they affect my chances of having a healthy child?
- Am I taking medicines that should be changed or not taken before I get pregnant?
- Do I need to change what I eat?
- Are there special risks from my job or home? Like chemicals, kitty litter, radiation?
- How will I know if I am ready for a baby and parenthood?
- How far apart should my pregnancies be?
- How and when do I get a pregnancy test? How and when do I start prenatal care?
- What choices do I have for prenatal care and delivery?

For More Information

The Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care has a “Becoming a Parent” booklet and checklist that give more information about planning for pregnancy. To get a copy, contact your doctor, nurse, or certified nurse midwife, or:

Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care
McConnell Hall
1010 Mound Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53715
phone: (608) 267-6060
fax: (608) 267-6089
email: wapc@perinatalweb.org
website: www.perinatalweb.org

Contact your doctor, nurse, certified nurse midwife or local health department for more information about:

- Good health practices
- Prenatal care
- How a fetus grows and develops
- Parenting



Wisconsin Association for
Perinatal Care

Becoming A Parent



***Things to think about before
you get pregnant.***