



Healthy Beginnings

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Promoting Healthy Births and Healthy Families

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Don't Sweat It! Managing Stress During Pregnancy

Do you find yourself feeling overwhelmed with all the excitement and responsibility of bringing a baby into the world? You're not alone. Many women share those same feelings during pregnancy. Chronic stress can lead to trouble sleeping, headaches, loss of appetite, overeating, or high blood pressure. Fortunately, there are a number of things you can do to fight off stress from the comfort of your home.

Although the effect of stress on babies is not well researched, reducing stress in your life can help you to make healthy choices, sleep better, and eat better; all of which will help your little one to be healthy as well.

Pregnancy brings physical discomfort, changing hormones, worries about labor and delivery, and the need to manage work responsibilities within your changing environment. All of this is normal and there are several things you can do to decrease how much these things affect you.

◆ **Know that discomfort is inevitable in pregnancy.** Back pain, joint pain, etc. can put stress on your body; however know that it is temporary and should stop after pregnancy. Pregnancy Yoga can be great in soothing some of that pain. There are many pregnancy yoga videos YouTube you can follow along with right from your living room.

◆ **Worrying about labor and delivery well before your due date can cause a lot of added stress.** To manage this, create a birth plan and share it with your physicians and nurses. Knowing there is a plan in place can help ease anxieties about the big day. Taking a childbirth education class can also help relieve your worries about giving birth.

◆ **Manage your work responsibilities.** If you need to, talk to your employer well beforehand about what you expect as you come back to

work. This might mean more breaks, longer breaks, using a private area/nursing room to breastfeed, and other issues as you get ready to go back to work.

◆ **Manage your reaction to stress.** Stress can cause many people to turn to drugs and alcohol to relax. If you can figure out what's causing your stress, you can plan how you react. Relaxation techniques and meditation can help with this.

◆ **Ask for help!** You are your biggest tool. If you need a helping hand, reach out to someone. No one is expected to be Super Parent! Asking for help with things such as household activities or taking care of baby will decrease your stress. There are also many online resources and communities for new moms that may help you feel better.

◆ **Stay healthy.** While we know that Many new moms don't get much rest, they are actually the ones who need it the most. Let a few minor household chores go in order to get more sleep!

◆ **Cut back on non-essentials.** Can someone else drop your child off at soccer practice? Can your partner cook dinner? Cutting back on these things and getting help from your support network will be a big plus.

◆ **If you need help managing stress, call your doctor for help.** If you are pregnant or a new mom, and struggle with anxiety or depression, call the Samaritan Counseling Center at (315) 724-5173 to schedule an appointment.

Sources: March of Dimes, NICHD

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The mission of the Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network is to improve birth outcomes and maternal, child and family health

Planning for Pregnancy

You've heard people say they are planning for when they become pregnant, but what does that actually mean? Planning for pregnancy is one of the easiest ways to set you and your baby up for a healthy life at the start. The things you do before you become pregnant can make a big impact. Some questions to consider: Am I ready to be a parent right now? Do I want to wait a while before I get pregnant? Is my partner ready? How many kids do I want? Preventing unplanned pregnancies before you're ready can make all the difference in how your baby grows up.

So what can I do to start planning?

→ Ask yourself these questions and carefully look over each answer:

- Why do you want to have a baby?
- Are you and your partner ready for the changes that having a baby can have on your relationship?
- If you're not in a relationship, are you prepared to raise a child alone?
- How will a baby affect your education or career plans?
- Have you and your partner talked about how you'll handle any religious or ethnic differences when raising your child?
- What will you do for child care?
- Are you prepared to parent a child who is sick or has special needs?
- Are you ready to have less free time for yourself?
- Can you see yourself enjoying your time as a parent?
- What do you want for your baby's childhood that may have been missing from your childhood?

→ Use birth control until you're ready to get pregnant: Ask your doctor about the right type of birth control for you

→ Think about what it's like to be a good parent: Being a parent is a big responsibility. Before you become pregnant, think about things like childcare and giving up your free time.

→ Budget for baby: Babies are expensive. Do you have enough money to pay for like child care, diapers, and medical care?

Do you need help preparing for your pregnancy?

There are many resources available to you. Call your primary care physician or OB/GYN.

The Women's Health Center (St. Elizabeth Medical Center) may also be able to help you. Located across the street from St. Elizabeth Medical Center, the Women's Health Center provides a variety of services to women that are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. Contact them at (315)801-8317.

You may be eligible for the Family Planning Benefit Program (FPBP)

- Birth control and other family planning services are available. It is FREE to females and males who qualify.
- To find out if you qualify, call Planned Parenthood at 315-724-6146.



Sources: March of Dimes, American Pregnancy Association, Centers for Disease Control

Shaken Baby Syndrome

Shaken Baby Syndrome occurs when a person violently shakes a baby or small child, causing the head to move back and forth or side to side. This causes the brain to move around inside the baby's skull and destroys or injures brain tissue. This can lead to tearing and bleeding in the brain and skull.

Most of the time, a baby is shaken because the person caring for them is frustrated or angry. Babies may cry more than expected and oftentimes do not stop crying for hours. This can cause anyone to become frustrated and angry. Sometimes, it is unclear what's wrong with the baby; you may feel you are a bad parent, bothering people, or are having problems toilet training or feeding. Most people who have shaken babies never wanted to hurt the baby and did not realize the consequences of their actions.

When Baby is Crying...

First, make sure all basic needs are met:

- Does the diaper need to be changed?
- Is baby hungry or thirsty? Need to be burped?
- Is baby too hot or too cold?
- Is baby bored or lonely?
- Is baby sick? Do they have a fever?
- Are they in pain? Pinched in a zipper?

If basic needs have been met but baby is still crying:

- Staying calm. Babies sense tension.
- Hold baby close to you and breath slowly and calmly.
- Gently walk, dance or rock with baby.
- Take baby for a ride in a stroller or car.
- Turn on music, run the vacuum or dryer. Babies like consistent rhythmic noise.
- Gently massage baby's body and limbs.

If all that doesn't work, it's perfectly okay to put your baby down in a safe environment (crib or bassinet) and leave the room for a few moments so you can calm down. Check on baby every 10-15 minutes to be sure they are still safe. They may even fall asleep!

Remember, it is absolutely okay to ask for help! You are not expected to know it all or do it all alone. Call someone you trust to come over and care for the baby so you can take a break.

Prevent Child Abuse NY Parent Helpline
24 hrs – 7 days/wk
1.800.342.7472

Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Plus
1.800.858.5222

Source: National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome

Baby Teeth are Important!

Baby teeth can get cavities and just because they will eventually fall out, that doesn't mean the cavities should go untreated. Here's why:

- Bacteria in your mouth turn sugar into acid that attacks the teeth for 20 minutes or more.
- Baby teeth hold space in the mouth for adult teeth to come in. If a tooth is lost too soon, the other teeth next to it could move into that empty spot. This can make adult teeth crowded and crooked.
- Healthy baby teeth are the key to healthy adult teeth.
- Decayed teeth can affect the child's self-esteem and they may not want to smile or show their teeth.
- Tooth pain can cause children to miss school time or become distracted by the pain while in school, making it hard to learn.
- Speech could be affected – we need our teeth to make "S" and "T" sounds.
- Nutrition suffers: healthy fruits and vegetables that could help reverse the problems are hard to chew; no one wants to eat apples or carrots when their teeth hurt!

Cavities are preventable!

- Wipe your baby's gums with a clean, wet gauze pad or washcloth after each feed, before sleep.
- As soon as the first tooth appears, start brushing your child's teeth twice a day. Use a soft bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
- The American Dental Association recommends that you brush your child's teeth for them until they are at least 8 years old (when your child is old enough to do it themselves).
- Offer healthy snacks that your child sits down to eat (avoid grazing).
- Choose rewards that are not sweets or soda.
- If your child does eat sweets, make sure it is with a meal.

Sugar and germs can be sneaky and do a lot of damage but with these tips they don't have to stay there for long.

Need help finding a dentist for your child? Give Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network a call at (315) 732-4657!



Source: Cavity Free Kids



We'd like to hear from you!
Send information about upcoming events or ideas for future articles to: MVPN Newsletter, 1000 Cornelia Street, 2nd Floor, Utica, NY 13502; Fax: 732-5640; Email: aowens@newfamily.org

Community Health Worker Services

Community Health Workers help women of child bearing age improve their health, as well as the health of their family. They are an outreach and home visiting program serving Oneida & Herkimer county residents. If you need help getting health insurance, nutrition information, food stamps, or finding a doctor, call them today!
(315) 272-2661

The Baby Weigh Station at the Oneida County Health Department

- Get answers to your questions from a Certified Lactation Counselor
- Check your baby's weight

We want to work with you to solve problems and build confidence so you can breastfeed as long as you would like!

Drop in Fridays 1-4 or call for an appointment.

Oneida County Health Department

406 Elizabeth Street, Utica New York

Please call 798-5906 or 798-5747 for more information or to make an appointment!

Breastfeeding Cafés

A place for pregnant and breastfeeding families to gather for breastfeeding support.

Utica: Lady of Lourdes Church, 2222 Genesee St. Utica, NY

1st, 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays of the month: 12:00-2:00 pm

4th Wednesday with LLL: 5:30-7:30 pm

Utica Public Library (Children's Room), 303 Genesee St. Utica, NY

2nd and 4th Fridays of the month: 12:00-2:00 pm

Rome: Trinity Church, 214 W Court St, Rome, NY

4th Wednesday of the month: 12:00-2:00 pm

Oneida: 607 Seneca Street, Oneida, NY

1st and 3rd Fridays of the month: 1:00-4:00 pm

Herkimer County: Ilion Free Library, 78 West St. Ilion, NY

1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month: 12:00-2:00 pm

Visit <http://mvbreastfeedingnetwork.com/locations/> for more information

The Family Planning Benefit Program

Did you know that New York State offers free services to decrease the rate of unintended pregnancy?

What's covered?

-Birth Control

-Emergency Contraceptives

-Yearly Exams and Pap Smears

-Follow-up treatment for sexually transmitted infections

-HIV Counseling and Testing

-Colposcopy/Cryosurgery/LEEP

-Sterilization

-Transportation to Family Planning Visits

To find out if you're eligible, contact **Planned Parenthood Mohawk Hudson** at (315) 374-5353.

Pregnant?

Protect yourself and your baby.

Get early prenatal care!

Prenatal Care - Medicaid Prenatal Services Program

Early and regular check-ups are important to you and your baby's health.

Medicaid Prenatal Services Program offers complete pregnancy care and other health care services to women and teens who live in New York State.

And there's no cost to eligible women who participate in Medicaid Prenatal Services!

Call MVPN at 732-4657 or toll free at 1-877-267-6193 for more information.