

Women's Health



- Every woman has the right to decide *if* and *when* to become pregnant and whether to continue a pregnancy.
- Many safe and effective birth control methods are available today.
- Planning pregnancy helps ensure a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby. It is important that a woman (and her partner) be as healthy as possible *before* she becomes pregnant.
- Early and regular prenatal care can prevent, detect, and treat many problems.
- Income should not be an obstacle! Many options are available to cover birth control, prenatal care, and abortion services – regardless of income or immigration status. For information, call 311.
- The consent of a spouse, partner, or parent is **NOT** required for reproductive health services, even for teenagers under 18.



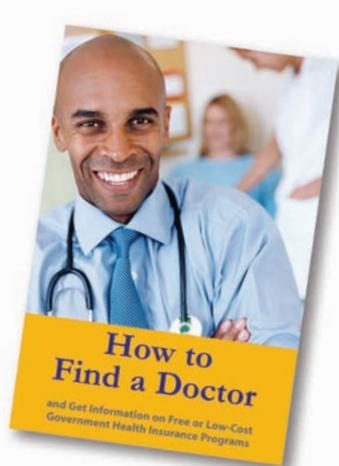
• Available in Spanish and Chinese: call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health
 • Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite nyc.gov/health
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10 Ways a Woman Can Stay Healthy

1. Have a regular doctor or other health care provider.

By working with your provider, you can prevent health problems or find them early.

- Schedule regular check-ups and stay up-to-date on immunizations.
- Be screened for high blood pressure and diseases such as diabetes.
- Get checked for cancer:
 - Pap tests are recommended every 1 to 3 years starting at age 21 (or within 3 years of beginning sexual activity, whichever comes first). How often depends on your risk factors and past test results.
 - Get a mammogram to check for breast cancer every 1 to 2 years, starting at age 40.



Call 311 for a free copy

2. Know your HIV status.

Protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

- Reduce risky behaviors and use a male condom or a female condom for every sexual act.
- Get tested for HIV and other STDs.
- If you are 25 or younger get tested for chlamydia once a year.
- Get vaccinated against hepatitis B.

3. Be tobacco-free.

Quit smoking and avoid second-hand smoke to prolong your life and protect those around you.

- More women die of lung cancer than any other cancer.
- Smoking can make it harder to get pregnant and to have a healthy baby.
 - Smoking can cause miscarriage, premature labor, and low birth weight.
 - Babies born too soon or too small can be very sick, and die more easily.
 - Babies whose parents smoke have much more asthma, bronchitis, ear infections, and pneumonia, and are more likely to die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).



For free help, call the Smokers' Quitline at 311.

4. Get regular exercise and eat a healthy diet.

Lower your risk of diabetes and many other illnesses.

- At least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as a brisk walk) at least 5 days a week helps to improve health, manage stress, and keep weight at a healthy level.
- Eat at least 5 servings of fruits or vegetables a day. Limit fatty, sugary foods and avoid sugar-sweetened drinks.

5. Live free of dependence on alcohol and drugs.

Recovery from addiction is possible.

- Moderate alcohol consumption (no more than 1 drink a day) may be okay for most women, but not for those who are pregnant or trying to get pregnant.
- Alcohol and drugs in pregnancy, even just a little, significantly increase the risk of birth defects and other problems.
- For help call 1-800-LIFENET (1-800-543-3638), or 311.

6. Get help if you are depressed or experiencing domestic violence.

You don't have to go it alone.

- Depression can be treated. Talk to your doctor or a mental health professional, or call 1-800-LIFENET (1-800-543-3638) or 311 for help.
- If someone is abusing you or someone you know, call the Domestic Violence Hotline 24-hours-a-day at 1-800-621-HOPE (1-800-621-4673). Or call 311 and ask for the Hotline. FOR EMERGENCIES CALL 911.

7. Choose *if and when* to become pregnant – it's every woman's right.

Many safe and effective birth control methods are available today.



- Emergency contraception (“morning-after”) pills can prevent pregnancy if a condom breaks, or after unprotected sex, or after rape. The sooner they are taken, the better!
 - Emergency contraception pills are most effective when taken within *72 hours (3 days)* after unprotected sex.
 - They are moderately effective when taken between *72 and 120 hours (3 to 5 days)* after unprotected sex.
- Teenagers, including those under 18, have the right to confidential reproductive health care, including birth control and abortion information and services, without parental permission or knowledge.
- For information and referrals for birth control, emergency contraception, abortion, and adoption services, call 311.



8. If you're planning pregnancy, see a doctor or other health care provider for a pre-pregnancy check-up.

Be as healthy as possible before becoming pregnant.

- Ideally, pregnancies should be spaced at least 18 months apart.
 - The first few weeks of pregnancy—before many women even know they are pregnant—are critical to a baby's development.
 - Taking a daily multivitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid (folate) *before* becoming pregnant can help prevent certain birth defects.
- Counseling can be provided for couples at risk for genetic problems (including sickle cell disease, Tay-Sachs, cystic fibrosis, and others).

9. See a health care provider as soon as you think you might be pregnant.

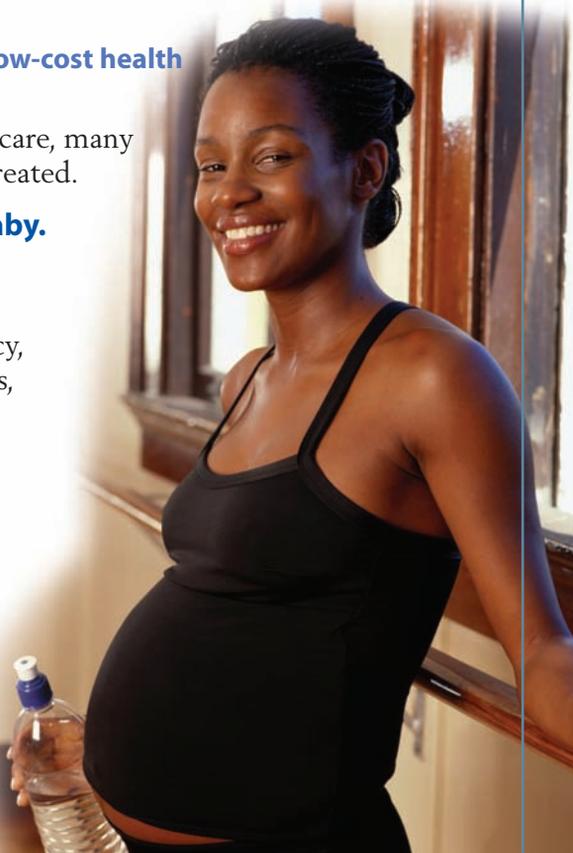
Many women qualify for free or low-cost health coverage for prenatal care.

- With early and regular prenatal care, many problems can be prevented or treated.

10. Protect your developing baby.

Healthy mother, healthy baby.

- Check with your doctor before taking any medicine in pregnancy, including over-the-counter drugs, herbal remedies, and medicinal teas.
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, or use street drugs.
- To protect yourself and your baby against HIV and other STDs, use a latex male condom or a female condom for every sexual act.



More Information

- Visit nyc.gov/health/maternity or call the Women's Healthline at 311
- Free or low-cost health insurance: Call 311
- The National Women's Information Center: www.4woman.gov or 1-800-994-WOMAN (1-800-994-9662); TDD 1-888-220-5446
- Planned Parenthood: www.plannedparenthood.org/health or call 1-800-230-PLAN (1-800-230-7526)

**DIAL
311**

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For a postal subscription, e-mail your name and address to healthcml@health.nyc.gov

Take Control

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Take Pride & TAKE CARE NEW YORK

10 STEPS to a LONGER and HEALTHIER LIFE for LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, and TRANSGENDER NEW YORKERS

- Take Care New York gives all New Yorkers steps to improve their health.
- If all of us took just some of these steps, we could prevent thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of illnesses and disabilities each year.
- While most health issues are the same for LGBT people as anyone else, a few are more common.

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Get Tested for HIV

Reduce risky behaviors and use condoms to protect yourself and others.

WHAT'S YOUR STATUS?

-	+	?
STAY SAFE	GET CARE	GET TESTED

- More than 100,000 New Yorkers are living with HIV.
- As many as 1 in 4 don't know they're infected.
- There is still no vaccine, and still no cure.
- Thanks to new medications and early treatment, people with HIV are feeling better and living longer — holding jobs, raising families, doing well.

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Pap Tests Save Lives Get Checked for Cervical Cancer!

- Cancer of the cervix (the lower end of the uterus) develops slowly and usually causes no symptoms.
- Regular Pap tests can prevent cervical cancer by finding cells that can be treated before they become cancer. Pap tests can also find signs of cancer early to prevent it from spreading.
- Pap tests are recommended every 1 to 3 years.
- If you have an abnormal Pap test, it is essential to get follow-up tests and treatment.
- If all women who need Pap tests get them, almost all deaths from cervical cancer could be prevented.

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Get Tested for Hepatitis C

If you have ever injected street drugs or have other risks.

- Hepatitis C is a liver disease that can cause serious illness and death.
- It is most often spread by sharing needles or other injection drug equipment.
- There is no vaccine, but there is a test. Many infected people can be treated.
- An estimated 200,000 – 300,000 New Yorkers have hepatitis C.
- Most don't know they are infected.

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Cut the Salt!

And lower your risk of heart attack and stroke.

- People who eat too much salt are more likely to have high blood pressure, heart attacks, and stroke.
- Your salt shaker is not the biggest culprit! Most salt sneaks into the diet in processed, packaged foods.
- To reduce salt intake, check food labels for sodium content. Choose foods with less than 5% of the daily value of sodium per serving.
- At home, experiment with other seasonings to add flavor.

SODIUM CHLORIDE is the chemical name for salt. Other food additives also contain sodium. It's sodium that makes blood pressure go up.

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Diabetes Is Epidemic

But it can be prevented and controlled.

- Diabetes is a serious illness that is increasing rapidly in New York City and around the country. In just the past 10 years, the number of people with diabetes has doubled.
- 1 in 8 adult New Yorkers — about 800,000 people — has diabetes. A third of them don't know it yet.
- People can often prevent diabetes by getting regular physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight.
- People with diabetes can successfully manage their illness — and lead longer and healthier lives.

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VOLUME 5, NUMBER 6



Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#40 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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