

# Preparing for pregnancy

The future of your kids does not start at the time of the birth, but in fact much before it. Planning for pregnancy is vital from various angles. In the case of unplanned pregnancy, a person may not know until three to four weeks, and by that time major organs and bodily structures are already forming. There is a chance that the pregnant person may be smoking, drinking, or taking medicines during this period. The planned approach towards pregnancy would help to avoid these risk factors.

In fact, if we believe in the newer science called [epigenetics](#), then both parents should make changes to their lifestyle before planning a child. Epigenetics demonstrates that a healthy lifestyle could alter the gene expression towards good, and these alterations can be passed on to next generation. Thus it is vital that both the genders should be involved in such processes, rather than leaving the duty solely to a woman.

## Getting ready for pregnancy

Thus, stopping drinking, smoking, and taking street drugs is an absolute must, and both genders should start eating a balanced diet and doing regular exercise. Therefore, to stick to the right kind of regime, it would be better if a couple got involved in healthy activities together, from cooking at home to exercising together. Remember that doing things together is not only beneficial due to psychological reasons but also due to biological reasons (keep in mind epigenetics).

But still the almighty has blessed women with the privilege to get into a holy state called pregnancy. Therefore, a few extra steps should be taken by woman planning to conceive.

- See your doctor and discuss your plans, your current health conditions, and their effects on pregnancy. If it is not your first planned child, tell your doctor about your earlier pregnancy and health problems, if you faced any with it.  
Ask the doctor about the effect of any medications you are taking while pregnant. Make sure that you are not suffering from any sexually transmitted diseases. If you are experiencing any chronic illnesses (like diabetes, asthma), make sure that the disease is well controlled.  
Take necessary vaccines before planning a pregnancy to make sure that you stay healthy during the pregnancy.
- It is recommended that you start taking 400 micrograms of folic acid at least one month before the planned pregnancy. It can help to prevent some defects of the brain and spine. Taking a multi-vitamin pill once a day is not a bad idea, as well, but do not overtake the vitamins.
- Learn about your family history, as some diseases are familial. Sharing your family history and diseases can help doctors to make informed decisions and take extra steps to ensure a healthy pregnancy.
- Maintain your body weight; a higher body weight increases the risk of miscarriage, gestational diabetes, and high blood pressure. Moderate exercise can be done even during pregnancy.

Finally and most importantly, do not forget to make love on a regular basis. If you are having sex less than three times a week then the chances of getting pregnant are reduced. Alternatively, you can learn to monitor your ovulation for proper planning.

Once you are pregnant, make sure that you continue with your newly formed healthy habits and see your doctor regularly during the pregnancy.

*About the author:*

Dr. Preet Bhinder (M.D.)

Dr. Preet is a family physician. He has been practicing medicine for the last 15 years and has a particular interest in maternal and child health. He understands the importance of healthy pregnancy and its long-term effects on a child's health. He is also a passionate writer.

---

*Our experts are constantly writing some amazing health and safety tips for you and your children. They love sharing their knowledge, and we hope you find it useful as well. However, you should always consult with your doctor first. Be sure to leave a comment and share your thoughts with other parents in our community. For more amazing articles visit **[www.LeighaMarina.com](http://www.LeighaMarina.com)***