

**PATIENT HANDOUT**

# Preconception Planning

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Congratulations on choosing to take a proactive approach to starting a family! Ideally, your preconception planning should begin at least 3 months before trying to conceive; however, it's never too late to begin to adopt healthful habits. Use this list during discussions with your health provider(s) and as a checklist when you get home.

<b>Preconception Checklist</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>Know Your History</b>			
Any genetic or heritable conditions in your or your partner's family? If so, what?			
Any personal health conditions or chronic diseases? If so, what?			
What medications and supplements are you taking?			
Has your primary provider checked your medications for pregnancy safety and/or changed your prescriptions to safer alternatives?			
Are you up-to-date on immunizations?			
• In particular, are you up-to-date with measles, mumps, rubella, and tetanus?			
Are you up-to-date on preventive screenings?			
• Dental cleaning/exam/x-rays			
• Pap/sexually transmitted disease screening if appropriate			
• Mammogram if appropriate			
• Blood-sugar levels/impaired-glucose tolerance if appropriate			
<b>Nutritional Status</b>			
Are you eating a healthy, well-balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables (at least 5 servings per day)?			
Are you taking a high-quality prenatal multivitamin?			
Are you taking an omega 3 supplement (ie, fish oil) from a source certified to be free of heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls?			
Has your provider checked you for common nutrient deficiencies with a blood test? At minimum, you should be checked for anemia (iron stores) and vitamin D.			
<b>Other Lifestyle Factors</b>			
Do you smoke? Quit now!			
Does your partner smoke? Help him or her quit too; second-hand smoke is almost as dangerous as first-hand.			
Excess caffeine can increase the risk of miscarriage. Have you reduced caffeine to less than 250 mg/day? This is equivalent to 1 cup of drip coffee per day. Be aware that nonherbal tea (black or green), many sodas, decaffeinated coffee, and chocolate also contain caffeine.			
Have you cut back on alcohol or abstained entirely once you are pregnant? There is no known safe amount of alcohol during pregnancy.			
How's your emotional health? Are you and your partner ready to become parents?			
<b>Environmental Factors</b>			
Are you a frequent air traveler? Ask your provider if you need to cut back or take precautions.			
Are you exposed to environmental risks through your hobbies, work, or location?			
Has your provider checked for your body burden of heavy metals? Ask if it makes sense for you.			