

Preparing for a Healthy Pregnancy

- ❖ **Talk to your health care provider if you are thinking about becoming pregnant.** Some medications should not be used during pregnancy, so some of the medications you take regularly may need to be changed.
- ❖ **Before you take any over-the-counter medications, herbal medications or supplements, please ask your health care provider if they are safe to use during pregnancy.** Avoid medications such as aspirin or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Anaprox, Orudis). It is safe to take acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- ❖ **Take one prenatal vitamin daily.** The folic acid in prenatal vitamins helps to prevent defects in the baby's spinal cord and brain. Ideal amounts are 400-1000 mg folic acid daily.
- ❖ **Get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).** STIs such as Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia can be dangerous to you and the baby during pregnancy, and some can cause miscarriages or birth defects. It is important that both you and your partner are screened and treated prior to pregnancy.
- ❖ **Avoid tobacco.** Smoking can decrease fertility in males and in females. If you smoke during pregnancy it is more likely that your baby will be smaller than it should be, as well as a higher risk of having a miscarriage or stillborn baby. Your baby may also have a higher risk of "crib death" (sudden infant death syndrome--SIDS) and asthma. Some women use oral medication, patches, and support from others to help them to quit. Ask your doctor, or call 1-800-NOBUTTS to talk with someone about quitting.
- ❖ **Avoid alcohol.** Alcohol, especially in large amounts, can lead to serious problems for your baby.
- ❖ **Avoid substances like crack, heroin or methamphetamines.** If you need assistance with stopping, ask your social worker or health care provider. You can take methadone during pregnancy if you are in recovery from heroin.
- ❖ **Get your immunizations up to date.** Vaccinations for Rubella and Hepatitis B are important before pregnancy, especially if you have a chronic condition like Hepatitis C or HIV. Rubella infection during pregnancy can be very serious for you and for your baby.
- ❖ **Safer conception:** Advances in HIV treatment and prevention make starting a family a safe, exciting option for women living with HIV. There are a number of options available for serodifferent couples (when one partner is HIV+ and the other is HIV-) who want to have a family. Please visit http://www.hiveonline.org/wlhiv/home_insemination.pdf for a guide on home insemination and <http://www.hiveonline.org/timed-intercourse/> for a video on timed ovulation.
- ❖ If you have any questions, please call HIVE at 415-206-8919.

