

Your Doctor is Your Friend

- Create and build a relationship with your doctor
- List questions on a piece of paper and take that with you into your next visit
- If you're planning for a family, ask your doctor for tips on family planning services that are available to you

Health Management

- Don't wait until you are sick to visit a doctor
- Keep up with regular checkups – it is easier to identify when something's wrong if your doctor is familiar with your medical history
- If pregnant, begin prenatal care as early as possible – Prenatal care is not always enough to reverse the affects of past behaviors and influences

Use Protection

- Not having sex is the only guaranteed way to prevent pregnancy or getting an STD
- 50% of pregnancies are UNPLANNED
- Protect yourself at all times and educate yourself on birth control options

Get Tested

- Get tested at least once a year to make sure you are free of disease or infection and follow through with treatment as needed
- If left untreated, certain STDs can be passed onto the baby through the uterus or during delivery, leading to long term health problems for your child

Open Up Communication

- It is important and necessary to talk to your partner about their sexual history
- If you're having unprotected sex, make sure you and your partner are ready to take on the responsibility that comes with starting a family
- Talk to your younger siblings and loved ones – if no one discussed making healthy decisions with you, who will talk to them?

Terms we need to understand.

Chronic Diseases

- A chronic disease is one that is long-lasting or recurrent. Some of the most common chronic diseases are diabetes, heart attack, stroke, obesity and certain types of cancer

Infant Mortality

- The number of children who die under the age of 1, each year, for every 1000 births

Low Birth Weight

- An infant born weighing less than 5½ pounds, which affects the child's long-term health

Preconception Health

- Improving the health of both parents prior to getting pregnant in order to have a healthier pregnancy and a healthier baby. Addressing parent's health impacts the long-term health of their children

Premature/Preterm Birth

- Babies born before 37 weeks of pregnancy may be underdeveloped and have low birth weight

Get More Information

Be informed. Visit LiveltChangelt.com and see how you can take charge of your health.

Community Resources

Mountain Park Health Center:

Baseline (602) 243-7277

Tempe (480) 921-1100

East Phoenix (602) 323-8200

Maryvale (623) 247-6266

Tolleson (623) 478-0774

Well Care (602) 263-7619



*We need to
make a
change*

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As African American men and women, we need to know what's going on in our community. And we need to take charge of our lives and start a movement for positive change.

Know it. Change it.

- Only 3% of Arizona's population is African American, yet we have the highest rate of poor birth outcomes in the state
- Preterm birth and low birth weight are among the leading causes of infant death
- Babies born at low birth weight are 30% less likely to be in very good health as a child and have a 70% chance of being in fair to poor health as an adult
- 50% of pregnancies are UNPLANNED
- The African American community has the highest rate of preventable infant deaths compared to other race groups. Fifty-nine percent of those deaths (or preventable deaths) are impacted by the mother's health BEFORE pregnancy.
- Although African Americans make up only 13% of the total U.S. population, they accounted for 49% of HIV/AIDS cases in 2007

Preconception and you.

As African Americans, we suffer from the highest rates of chronic diseases, sexually transmitted diseases and infections, premature births, babies born with low birth weight and infant mortality. To make a change, we have to take charge of our health and control what we pass down to future generations.

Preconception Health is a term we all need to know. For both men and women, it means making healthy choices regarding your future wellbeing. More importantly, we need to know how these decisions work together to guarantee healthy pregnancies and healthy babies.

Take action now. Learn how to make informed decisions – and share this new information with your community. Together, we need to address:

- Risky Behaviors
- Stress Management
- Healthy Living

Risky Behaviors

Drinking – Drink responsibly. And in moderation!

- Alcohol consumption is the leading cause of preventable birth defects in the fetus
- Consuming alcohol when pregnant increases the risk of still births and miscarriages

Smoking – Don't do it.

- Whether or not you plan on becoming pregnant, stopping smoking will improve your health
- Do not smoke when pregnant and quit smoking when trying to get pregnant
- Smoking increases the chances of pre term labor, low birth weight and poor lung development in babies

Stop Drug Use.

- Whether or not you plan on becoming pregnant, stopping drug use will improve your health
- Prior to pregnancy, drug use can stay in the body and negatively affect birth outcomes



- With all drugs, there is an increased risk for miscarriage, low birth weight and birth defects in babies
- Many drugs reduce the number and quality of male sperm

Stress Management

Reduce Stress

- Stress can take a major toll on your mind and body, increasing your risk for disease and/or illness
- Stress on mothers-to-be has been linked to pre-term labor and babies born with low or very low birth weight
- Take 20 minutes out of your day to sit down, breathe deeply and think about something positive
- If you are faced with a difficult situation, remember to remain calm, react positively and seek support

Healthy Living

Nutrition

- Diabetes and obesity greatly increase the risk for having babies with birth defects
- Small changes can have a BIG impact on your health
 - Eat smaller portions
 - Add fruits and vegetables into every meal
 - Drink water in place of sugar-sweetened beverages
 - Start out every morning with breakfast to provide your brain and muscles with the fuel they need for energy throughout the day
 - For women, taking daily folic acid (400 micrograms) for 3 months prior to getting pregnant can greatly reduce a baby's risk of birth defects

Exercise

- Regular physical activity strengthens your heart, helps control blood pressure, maintain your weight and can even help your mood
- Moderate activity, for example, can be something as simple as a brisk walk, swimming or yard work, and should be done for AT LEAST 30 minutes 5 days a week
- Spread your activities out during the week - try breaking it up into 10 minutes at a time throughout the day