

Health care providers in all specialties should make the most of every opportunity to encourage EVERY WOMEN of reproductive age to be HEALTHY.

The HEALTHY acronym provides a quick provider reference for areas to address in preconception counseling.

H - Health Promotion

- Choose healthy foods every day including plenty of vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and low fat or fat free milk
- Take a multivitamin everyday that contains 400-800 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid
- Make physical activity part of your life. Adults should get at least two hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity, such as walking, each week and do muscle strengthening activities on at least two days a week
- See a dentist at least twice a year to have your teeth cleaned and your gums examined
- Visit <http://www://MyPyramid.gov> for a step-by-step plan for healthy eating and physical activity

E - Environment

- Reduce exposure to harmful substances in the home and workplace such as lead, pesticides, radiation, chemicals, and mercury

A - Assess For Psychosocial Risk Factors

- Domestic violence, stress, and depression can have negative effects on health
- Encourage plenty of rest and offer ways to reduce stress
- Be alert; refer for counseling and treatment if needed

L - Lifestyle Changes

- Alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs can be harmful to one's health
- Refer client to appropriate programs
- Talk to your client about family planning to prevent unplanned pregnancies
- Encourage your client to complete a reproductive life plan
- Promote safe sex practices to prevent sexually-transmitted infections

T - Tested And Treated For Infections

- Encourage the client to know their hepatitis B and HIV status
- Be sure that all immunizations are up-to-date
- Offer testing and treatment for sexually-transmitted infections
- Counsel on safe sex practices and dangers of douching
- When possible offer the same services to the client's partner

H- Healthy History

- Chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart problems may increase the risk of a poor health outcome. Encourage and assist clients in following up on conditions
- If there is a family history of genetic disorders, counseling should be obtained
- Encourage client to ask her partner about his family medical history

Y - you can make the difference

- Encourage the client to take responsibility for their health

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PRECONCEPTION HEALTH:

CALL: The Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Hotline at 1-800-833-4642 **VISIT:** www.azdhs.gov/phs/owch or www.marchofdimes.com

This material is for information purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Materials adapted from "Every Woman, Every Time" developed by Sutter Medical Center Sacramento with funding from March of Dimes CA Chapter and "Healthy Women Florida" developed by the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Family and Community Health.

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