

## Interconception

**Categories :** [Children and Families](#), [First Time Mothers](#), [Health Issues](#)

Interconception is the time between the end of one pregnancy and the beginning of the next one, when the mother and father should make sure they are in good health before becoming pregnant again. It is also a time to identify those women who might have a poor birth outcome. This includes women who had a low birth weight baby, who had a miscarriage or a stillbirth, or who had a baby born with birth defects. The goal of interconception care is to take steps to improve the outcome for the next pregnancy.

### **BEFORE BECOMING PREGNANT AGAIN**

Both mother and father should make sure they are as healthy as possible before becoming pregnant again. It is also important for a woman to give her body time to recover after a birth, and time to adjust to being a mother of a newborn before becoming pregnant again. Studies have shown that getting pregnant again too quickly may increase the risk of a preterm birth or a low weight baby. The optimal time to wait before becoming pregnant again is 12-18 months. To read more about the optimal time to wait before becoming pregnant again, go to:

- [March of Dimes](#)
- [HealthyWomen.org](#)

### **PLAN THE TIMING OF YOUR PREGNANCIES!**

To learn about how to avoid becoming pregnant before you are ready, go to Planned Parenthood's page on family planning: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/pregnancy>

### **WHO SHOULD RECEIVE INTERCONCEPTION CARE?**

There is no way to ensure that every baby is born healthy, but some factors may put you at risk of a poor birth outcome. Some of these factors include:

- You had a previous live birth at less than 37 weeks gestation
- You had a previous live birth where the baby did not grow enough during the pregnancy.
- You had a baby born with a birth defect.
- You had a miscarriage or a stillbirth.
- You have any type of chronic disease, regardless of the outcome of a previous pregnancy.
- You have a history of sexually transmitted diseases.
- You smoke, drink, use illegal drugs, or use prescription drugs that may be harmful to a fetus.

Any woman who has any of the above risk factors should get care between pregnancies. Studies show that women who had poor pregnancy outcomes in previous births are at risk for having them again.

### **INTERCONCEPTION HEALTH CARE**

Health care providers and case managers can assess your risk and help you get the care you need before becoming pregnant again, so that you have the best chance for staying healthy yourself and for delivering a healthy baby. Interconception health care includes:

- Nutrition counseling



- Treatment of diseases and chronic health conditions
- Assessment of environmental risk factors
- Help with smoking cessation and avoidance of drugs and alcohol
- Genetic counseling
- Family planning counseling and prescriptions to avoid becoming pregnant again too soon.

## **PRECONCEPTION SCREENING TOOL**

Preconception health (before pregnancy health) is very important and can affect the health of your future baby. By making a plan before getting pregnant and taking the time to get healthy, you can take steps to a healthier you and baby-to-be. Go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for information to help you do that:

<https://www.cdc.gov/preconception/index.html>

**TO FIND RESOURCES in Connecticut's Community Resources database search by service name:**

- [Pregnancy Counseling](#)
- [Prenatal Care](#)

Or call us by dialing 2-1-1. We are open 24/7.

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SOURCE: HealthyWomen.org; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Planned Parenthood; March of Dimes  
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